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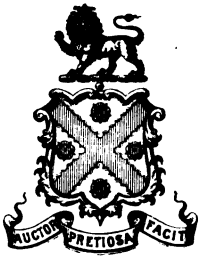

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WILD WALES:

ITS PEOPLE, LANGUAGE, AND SCENERY.

BY GEORGE BORROW,

AUTHOR OF "THE BIBLE IN SPAIN," ETC.

"Their Lord they shall praise,
Their language they shall keep,
Their land they shall lose,
Except Wild Wales."

TALIESIN: *Destiny of the Britons.*

IN THREE VOLUMES.—VOL. III.

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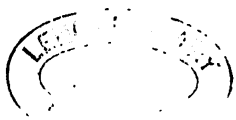

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WILD WALES:

ITS PEOPLE, LANGUAGE, AND SCENERY.

CHAPTER I.

CHURCH OF LLAN RHYADR.—THE CLERK.—THE TABLET-STONE.—FIRST VIEW OF THE CATARACT.

THE night was both windy and rainy like the preceding one, but the morning which followed, unlike that of the day before, was dull and gloomy. After breakfast I walked out to take another view of the little town. As I stood looking at the church a middle-aged man of a remarkably intelligent countenance came up and asked me if I should like to see the inside. I told him I should, whereupon he said that he was the clerk and would admit me with pleasure. Taking a key out of his pocket he unlocked the door of the church and we went in.

The inside was sombre, not so much owing to the gloominess of the day as the heaviness of the architecture. It presented something of the form of a cross. I soon found the clerk, what his countenance represented him to be, a highly intelligent person. His answers to my questions were in general ready and satisfactory.

"This seems rather an ancient edifice," said I; "when was it built?"

"In the sixteenth century," said the clerk; "in the days of Harry Tudor."

"Have any remarkable men been clergymen of this church?"

"Several, sir; amongst its vicars was Doctor William Morgan the great South Welshman, the author of the old Welsh version of the Bible, who flourished in the time of Queen Elizabeth. Then there was Doctor Robert South, an eminent divine, who though not a Welshman spoke and preached Welsh better than many of the native clergy. Then there was the last vicar, Walter D——, a great preacher and writer, who styled himself in print Gwalter Mechain."

"Are Morgan and South buried here?" said I.

"They are not, sir," said the clerk; "they had been transferred to other benefices before they died."

I did not inquire whether Walter D—— was buried there, for of him I had never heard before, but demanded whether the church possessed any ancient monuments.

"This is the oldest which remains, sir," said the clerk, and he pointed with his finger to a tablet-stone over a little dark pew on the right side of the oriel window. There was an inscription upon it, but owing to the darkness I could not make out a letter. The clerk however read as follows.

1694. 21 Oct^r.
Hic Sepultus Est
Sidneus Bynner.

"Do you understand Latin?" said I to the clerk.

"I do not, sir; I believe, however, that the stone is to the memory of one Bynner."

"That is not a Welsh name," said I.

"It is not, sir," said the clerk.

"It seems to be radically the same as Bonner," said I, "the name of the horrible Popish Bishop of London in Mary's time. Do any people of the name of Bynner reside in this neighbourhood at present?"

"None, sir," said the clerk; "and if the Bynners are the descendants of Bonner, it is, perhaps, well that there are none."

I made the clerk, who appeared almost fit to be a clergyman, a small present, and returned to the inn. After paying my bill I flung my satchel over my shoulder, took my umbrella by the middle in my right hand, and set off for the Rhyadr.

I entered the narrow glen at the western extremity of the town and proceeded briskly along. The scenery was romantically beautiful: on my left was the little brook, the waters of which run through the town; beyond it a lofty hill; on my right was a hill covered with wood from the top to the bottom. I enjoyed the scene, and should have enjoyed it more had there been a little sunshine to gild it.

I passed through a small village, the name

of which I think was Cynmen, and presently overtook a man and boy. The man saluted me in English and I entered into conversation with him in that language. He told me that he came from Llan Gedwin, and was going to a place called Gwern something in order to fetch home some sheep. After a time he asked me where I was going.

"I am going to see the Pistyll Rhyadr," said I.

We had then just come to the top of a rising ground.

"Yonder's the Pistyll!" said he, pointing to the west.

I looked in the direction of his finger, and saw something at a great distance, which looked like a strip of grey linen hanging over a crag.

"That is the waterfall," he continued, "which so many of the Saxons come to see. And now I must bid you good-bye, master; for my way to the Gwern is on the right."

Then followed by the boy he turned aside into a wild road at the corner of a savage, precipitous rock.

CHAPTER II.

MOUNTAIN SCENERY.—THE RHYADR.—WONDERFUL FEAT.

AFTER walking about a mile with the cataract always in sight, I emerged from the glen into an oblong valley extending from south to north, having lofty hills on all sides, especially on the west, from which direction the cataract comes. I advanced across the vale till within a furlong of this object, when I was stopped by a deep hollow or nether vale into which the waters of the cataract tumble. On the side of this hollow I sat down, and gazed before me and on either side. The water comes spouting over a crag of perhaps two hundred feet in altitude between two hills, one south-east and the other nearly north. The southern hill is wooded

from the top, nearly down to where the cataract bursts forth; and so, but not so thickly, is the northern hill, which bears a singular resemblance to a hog's back. Groves of pine are on the lower parts of both; in front of a grove low down on the northern hill is a small white house of a picturesque appearance. The water of the cataract, after reaching the bottom of the precipice, rushes in a narrow brook down the vale in the direction of Llan Rhyadr. To the north-east, between the hog-backed hill and another strange-looking mountain, is a wild glen, from which comes a brook to swell the waters discharged by the Rhyadr. The south-west side of the vale is steep, and from a cleft of a hill in that quarter a slender stream rushing impetuously joins the brook of the Rhyadr, like the rill of the northern glen. The principal object of the whole is of course the Rhyadr. What shall I liken it to? I scarcely know, unless to an immense skein of silk agitated and disturbed by tempestuous blasts, or to the long tail of a grey courser at furious speed. Through the profusion of long silvery threads or hairs, or

what looked such, I could here and there see the black sides of the crag down which the Rhyadr precipitated itself with something between a boom and a roar.

After sitting on the verge of the hollow for a considerable time I got up, and directed my course towards the house in front of the grove. I turned down the path which brought me to the brook which runs from the northern glen into the waters discharged by the Rhyadr, and crossing it by stepping-stones found myself on the lowest spur of the hog-backed hill. A steep path led towards the house. As I drew near, two handsome dogs came rushing to welcome the stranger. Coming to a door on the northern side of the house I tapped and a handsome girl of about thirteen making her appearance I enquired in English the nearest way to the waterfall; she smiled, and in her native language said that she had no Saxon. On my telling her in Welsh that I was come to see the Pistyll she smiled again, and said that I was welcome, then taking me round the house she pointed to a path and bade me follow it. I followed the path

which led downwards to a tiny bridge of planks, a little way below the fall. I advanced to the middle of the bridge, then turning to the west looked at the wonderful object above me.

There are many remarkable cataracts in Britain and the neighbouring isles, even the little Celtic Isle of Man has its remarkable waterfall; but this Rhyadr, the grand cataract of North Wales, far exceeds them all in altitude and beauty, though it is inferior to several of them in the volume of its flood. I never saw water falling so gracefully, so much like thin beautiful threads as here. Yet even this cataract has its blemish. What beautiful object has not something which more or less mars its loveliness? There is an ugly black bridge or semicircle of rock, about two feet in diameter and about twenty feet high, which rises some little way below it, and under which the water, after reaching the bottom passes, which intercepts the sight, and prevents it from taking in the whole fall at once. This unsightly object has stood where it now stands since the day of creation, and will probably remain there to the day of judgment. It would

be a desecration of nature to remove it by art, but no one could regret if nature in one of her floods were to sweep it away.

As I was standing on the planks a woman plainly but neatly dressed came from the house. She addressed me in very imperfect English, saying that she was the mistress of the house and should be happy to show me about. I thanked her for her offer and told her that she might speak Welsh, whereupon she looked glad and said in that tongue that she could speak Welsh much better than Saesneg. She took me by a winding path up a steep bank on the southern side of the fall to a small plateau, and told me that was the best place to see the Pistyll from. I did not think so, for we were now so near that we were almost blinded by the spray, though, it is true, the semicircle of rock no longer impeded the sight; this object we now saw nearly laterally rising up like a spectral arch, spray and foam above it, and water rushing below. "That is a bridge rather for ysprydoedd* to pass over than men," said I.

* Spirits.

"It is," said the woman; "but I once saw a man pass over it."

"How did he get up?" said I. "The sides are quite steep and slippery."

"He wriggled up the side like a llysowen,* till he got to the top, when he stood upright for a minute, and then slid down on the other side."

"Was he any one from these parts?" said I.

"He was not. He was a dyn dieithr, a Russian; one of those with whom we are now at war."

"Was there as much water tumbling then as now?"

"More, for there had fallen more rain."

"I suppose the torrent is sometimes very dreadful?" said I.

"It is indeed, especially in winter; for it is then like a sea, and roars like thunder or a mad bull."

After I had seen all I wished of the cataract, the woman asked me to come to the house and take some refreshment. I followed her to a

* Eel.

neat little room where she made me sit down and handed me a bowl of buttermilk. On the table was a book in which she told me it was customary for individuals who visited the cataract to insert their names. I took up the book which contained a number of names mingled here and there with pieces of poetry. Amongst these compositions was a Welsh englyn on the Rhyadr, which though incorrect in its prosody I thought stirring and grand. I copied it, and subjoin it with a translation which I made on the spot.

Crychiawg, ewynawg anian—yw y Rhyadr
Yn rhuo mal taran ;
Colofn o dwr, gloyw-dwr glan,
Gorwyllt, un lliw ag arian.

Foaming and frothing from mountainous height,
Roaring like thunder the Rhyadr falls ;
Though its silvery splendour the eye may delight,
Its fury the heart of the bravest appals.

CHAPTER III.

WILD MOORS.—THE GUIDE.—SCIENTIFIC DISCOURSE.—THE LAND OF ARTHUR.—THE UMBRELLA.—ARRIVAL AT BALA.

WHEN I had rested myself and finished the buttermilk I got up and making the good woman a small compensation for her civility inquired if I could get to Bala without returning to Llan Rhyadr.

"O yes," said she, "if you cross the hills for about five miles you will find yourself upon a road which will take you straight to Bala."

"Is there any one here," said I, "who will guide me over the hills provided I pay him for his trouble?"

"O yes," said she; "I know one who will be happy to guide you whether you pay him or not."

She went out and presently returned with a man about thirty-five, stout and well-looking, and dressed in a waggoner's frock.

"There," said she, "this is the man to show you over the hills; few know the paths better."

I thanked her, and telling the man I was ready, bade him lead the way. We set out, the two dogs of which I have spoken attending us and seemingly very glad to go. We ascended the side of the hog-backed hill to the north of the Rhyadr. We were about twenty minutes in getting to the top, close to which stood a stone or piece of rock, very much resembling a church altar, and about the size of one. We were now on an extensive moory elevation, having the brook which forms the Rhyadr a little way on our left. We went nearly due west, following no path for path there was none, but keeping near the brook. Sometimes we crossed watercourses which emptied their tribute in the brook, and every now and then ascended and descended hillocks covered with gorse and whin. After a little time I entered into conversation with my guide. He

had not a word of English. "Are you married?" said I.

"In truth I am, sir."

"What family have you?"

"I have a daughter."

"Where do you live?"

"At the house of the Rhyadr."

"I suppose you live there as servant?"

"No, sir, I live there as master."

"Is the good woman I saw there your wife?"

"In truth, sir, she is."

"And the young girl I saw your daughter?"

"Yes, sir, she is my daughter."

"And how came the good woman not to tell me you were her husband?"

"I suppose, sir, you did not ask who I was, and she thought you did not care to know."

"But can you be spared from home?"

"O yes, sir, I was not wanted at home."

"What business are you?"

"I am a farmer, sir."

"A sheep farmer?"

"Yes, sir."

"Who is your landlord?"

"Sir Watkin."

"Well, it was very kind of you to come with me."

"Not at all, sir; I was glad to come with you, for we are very lonesome at Rhyadr, except during a few weeks in the summer, when the gentry come to see the Pistyll. Moreover, I have sheep lying about here which need to be looked at now and then, and by coming hither with you I shall have an opportunity of seeing them."

We frequently passed sheep feeding together in small numbers. In two or three instances my guide singled out individuals, caught them, and placing their heads between his knees examined the insides of their eyelids, in order to learn by their colour whether or not they were infected with the pwd or moor disorder. We had some discourse about that malady. At last he asked me if there was a remedy for it.

"O yes," said I; "a decoction of hoarhound."

"What is hoarhound?" said he.

"Llwyd y Cwn," said I. "Pour some of that down the sheep's throat twice a day, by means of a horn, and the sheep will recover, for the bitterness, do you see, will destroy the worm* in the liver, which learned men say is the cause of the disorder."

We left the brook on our left hand and passed by some ruined walls which my guide informed me had once belonged to houses but were now used as sheepfolds. After walking several miles, according to my computation, we began to ascend a considerable elevation covered with brown heath and ling. As we went on the dogs frequently put up a bird of a black colour, which flew away with a sharp whirr.

"What bird is that?" said I.

"Ceiliog y grug, the cock of the heath," replied my guide. "It is said to be very good eating, but I have never tasted it. The ceiliog

* For an account of this worm, which has various denominations, see article Fasciola Hepatica in any encyclopædia.

y grug is not food for the like of me. It goes to feed the rich Saxons in Caer Ludd."

We reached the top of the elevation.

"Yonder," said my guide, pointing to a white bare place a great way off to the west, "is Bala road."

"Then I will not trouble you to go any farther," said I; "I can find my way thither."

"No, you could not," said my guide; "if you were to make straight for that place you would perhaps fall down a steep, or sink into a peat hole up to your middle, or lose your way and never find the road, for you would soon lose sight of that place. Follow me, and I will lead you into a part of the road more to the left, and then you can find your way easily enough to that bare place, and from thence to Bala." Thereupon he moved in a southerly direction down the steep and I followed him. In about twenty minutes we came to the road.

"Now," said my guide, "you are on the

road; bear to the right and you cannot miss the way to Bala."

"How far is it to Bala?" said I.

"About twelve miles," he replied.

I gave him a trifle, asking at the same time if it was sufficient. "Too much by one-half," he replied; "many, many thanks." He then shook me by the hand, and accompanied by his dogs departed, not back over the moor, but in a southerly direction down the road.

Wending my course to the north, I came to the white bare spot which I had seen from the moor, and which was in fact the top of a considerable elevation over which the road passed. Here I turned and looked at the hills I had come across. There they stood, darkly blue, a rain cloud, like ink, hanging over their summits. O, the wild hills of Wales, the land of old renown and of wonder, the land of Arthur and Merlin.

The road now lay nearly due west. Rain came on, but it was at my back, so I expanded my umbrella, flung it over my shoulder and laughed. O, how a man laughs who has a

good umbrella when he has the rain at his back, aye and over his head too, and at all times when it rains except when the rain is in his face, when the umbrella is not of much service. O, what a good friend to a man is an umbrella in rain time, and likewise at many other times. What need he fear if a wild bull or a ferocious dog attacks him, provided he has a good umbrella? he unfurls the umbrella in the face of the bull or dog, and the brute turns round quite scared, and runs away. Or if a footpad asks him for his money, what need he care provided he has an umbrella? he threatens to dodge the ferrule into the ruffian's eye, and the fellow starts back and says, "Lord, sir! I meant no harm. I never saw you before in all my life. I merely meant a little fun." Moreover, who doubts that you are a respectable character provided you have an umbrella? you go into a public-house and call for a pot of beer, and the publican puts it down before you with one hand without holding out the other for the money, for he sees that you have an umbrella and consequently property. And what respectable man when you overtake

him on the way and speak to him will refuse to hold conversation with you, provided you have an umbrella? No one. The respectable man sees you have an umbrella and concludes that you do not intend to rob him, and with justice, for robbers never carry umbrellas. O, a tent, a shield, a lance and a voucher for character is an umbrella. Amongst the very best friends of man must be reckoned an umbrella.*

The way lay over dreary, moory hills: at last it began to descend and I saw a valley below me with a narrow river running through it to which wooded hills sloped down; far to the west were blue mountains. The scene was beautiful but melancholy; the rain had passed away, but a gloomy almost November sky was above, and the mists of night were coming down apace.

I crossed a bridge at the bottom of the valley

* As the umbrella is rather a hackneyed subject two or three things will of course be found in the above eulogium on an umbrella which have been said by other folks on that subject; the writer, however, flatters himself that in his eulogium on an umbrella two or three things will also be found which have never been said by any one else about an umbrella.

and presently saw a road branching to the right. I paused, but after a little time went straight forward. Gloomy woods were on each side of me and night had come down. Fear came upon me that I was not in the right road, but I saw no house at which I could inquire, nor did I see a single individual for miles of whom I could ask. At last I heard the sound of hatchets in a dingle on my right, and catching a glimpse of a gate at the head of a path, which led down into it, I got over it. After descending some time I hallooed. The noise of the hatchets ceased, I hallooed again, and a voice cried in Welsh, "What do you want?" "To know the way to Bala," I replied. There was no answer, but presently I heard steps, and the figure of a man drew nigh half undistinguishable in the darkness and saluted me. I returned his salutation, and told him I wanted to know the way to Bala. He told me, and I found I had been going right. I thanked him and regained the road. I sped onward and in about half an hour saw some houses, then a bridge, then a lake on my left

which I recognized as the lake of Bala. I skirted the end of it, came to a street cheerfully lighted up, and in a minute more was in the White Lion Inn.

CHAPTER IV.

CHEERFUL FIRE.—IMMENSE MAN.—DOCTOR JONES.—RECOGNITION.—A FAST YOUNG MAN.— EXCELLENT REMARKS.—DISAPPOINTMENT.

I WAS conducted into the coffee-room of the White Lion by a little freckled maid whom I saw at the bar, and whom I told that I was come to pass the night at the inn. The room presented an agreeable contrast to the gloomy, desolate places through which I had lately come. A good fire blazed in the grate, and there were four lights on the table. Lolling in a chair by one side of the fire was an individual at the sight of whom I almost started. He was an immense man, weighing I should say at least eighteen stone, with brown hair, thinnish whiskers, half-ruddy, half-tallowy complexion, and dressed in a brown sporting coat, drab

breeches and yellow-topped boots—in every respect the exact image of the Wolverhampton gent or hog-merchant who had appeared to me in my dream at Llangollen, whilst asleep before the fire. Yes, the very counterpart of that same gent looked this enormous fellow, save and except that he did not appear to be more than seven or eight and twenty, whereas the hog-merchant looked at least fifty. Laying my satchel down I took a seat and ordered the maid to get some dinner for me, and then asked what had become of the waiter Tom Jenkins.

"He is not here at present, sir," said the freckled maid; "he is at his own house."

"And why is he not here?" said I.

"Because he is not wanted, sir; he only comes in summer when the house is full of people."

And having said this the little freckled damsel left the room.

"Reither a cool night, sir!" said the enormous man after we had been alone together a few minutes.

I again almost started, for he spoke with the

same kind of half-piping, half-wheezing voice, with which methought the Wolverhampton gent had spoken to me in my dream.

"Yes," said I; "it is rather cold out abroad, but I don't care as I am not going any farther to-night."

"That's not my case," said the stout man, "I have got to go ten miles, as far as Cerrig Drudion, from which place I came this afternoon in a wehicle."

"Do you reside at Cerrig Drudion?" said I.

"No," said the stout man, whose dialect I shall not attempt further to imitate, "but I have been staying there some time; for happening to go there a month or two ago I was tempted to take up my quarters at the inn. A very nice inn it is, and the landlady a very agreeable woman, and her daughters very agreeable young ladies."

"Is this the first time you have been at Bala?"

"Yes, the first time. I had heard a good deal about it, and wished to see it. So to-day having the offer of a vehicle at a cheap rate I

came over with two or three other gents, amongst whom is Doctor Jones."

"Dear me," said I; "is Doctor Jones in Bala?"

"Yes," said the stout man; "do you know him?"

"O yes," said I, "and have a great respect for him; his like for politeness and general learning is scarcely to be found in Britain."

"Only think," said the stout man. "Well, I never heard that of him before."

Wishing to see my sleeping room before I got my dinner, I now rose and was making for the door, when it opened, and in came Doctor Jones. He had a muffler round his neck, and walked rather slowly and disconsolately, leaning upon a cane. He passed without appearing to recognize me, and I, thinking it would be as well to defer claiming acquaintance with him till I had put myself a little to rights, went out without saying anything to him. I was shown by the freckled maid to a nice sleeping apartment, where I stayed some time adjusting myself. On my return to the coffee-

room I found the doctor sitting near the fireplace. The stout man had left the room. I had no doubt that he had told Doctor Jones that I had claimed acquaintance with him, and that the doctor not having recollected me had denied that he knew anything of me, for I observed that he looked at me very suspiciously.

I took my former seat, and after a minute's silence said to Doctor Jones, "I think, sir, I had the pleasure of seeing you some time ago at Cerrig Drudion?"

"It's possible, sir," said Doctor Jones in a tone of considerable hauteur, and tossing his head so that the end of his chin was above his comforter, "but I have no recollection of it."

I held my head down for a little time, then raising it and likewise my forefinger I looked Doctor Jones full in the face and said, "Don't you remember talking to me about Owen Pugh and Coll Gwynfa?"

"Yes, I do," said Doctor Jones in a very low voice, like that of a person who deliberates;

"yes, I do. I remember you perfectly, sir," he added almost immediately in a tone of some animation; "you are the gentleman with whom I had a very interesting conversation one evening last summer in the bar of the inn at Cerrig Drudion. I regretted very much that our conversation was rather brief, but I was called away to attend to a case, a professional case, sir, of some delicacy, and I have since particularly regretted that I was unable to return that night, as it would have given me much pleasure to have been present at a dialogue which I have been told by my friend the landlady, you held with a certain Italian who was staying at the house, which was highly agreeable and instructive to herself and her daughter."

"Well," said I, "I am rejoiced that fate has brought us together again. How have you been in health since I had the pleasure of seeing you?"

"Rather indifferent, sir, rather indifferent. I have of late been afflicted with several ailments the original cause of which, I believe, was a residence of several years in the Ynysoedd y

Gorllewin—the West-India Islands—where I had the honour of serving her present gracious Majesty's gracious uncle, George the Fourth—in a medical capacity, sir. I have likewise been afflicted with lowness of spirits, sir. It was this same lowness of spirits which induced me to accept an invitation made by the individual lately in the room to accompany him in a vehicle with some other people to Bala. I shall always consider my coming as a fortunate circumstance inasmuch as it has given me an opportunity of renewing my acquaintance with you."

"Pray," said I, "may I take the liberty of asking who that individual is?"

"Why," said Dr. Jones, "he is what they call a Wolverhampton gent."

"A Wolverhampton gent," said I to myself; "only think!"

"Were you pleased to make any observation, sir?" said the doctor.

"I was merely saying something to myself," said I. "And in what line of business may he be? I suppose in the hog line."

"O no!" said Doctor Jones. "His father it is true is a hog-merchant, but as for himself he follows no business; he is what is called a fast young man, and goes about here and there on the spree, as I think they term it, drawing, whenever he wants money, upon his father, who is in affluent circumstances. Some time ago he came to Cerrig Drudion, and was so much pleased with the place, the landlady and her daughters that he has made it his head-quarters ever since. Being frequently at the house I formed an acquaintance with him, and have occasionally made one in his parties and excursions, though I can't say I derive much pleasure from his conversation, for he is a person of little or no literature."

"The son of a hog-merchant," thought I to myself. "Depend upon it, that immense fellow whom I saw in my dream purchase the big hog at Llangollen fair, and who wanted me to give him a poond for his bargain, was this gent's father. O there is much more in dreams than is generally dreamt of by philosophy!"

Doctor Jones presently began to talk of

Welsh literature, and we were busily engaged in discussing the subject when in walked the fast young man, causing the floor to quake beneath his ponderous tread. He looked rather surprised at seeing the doctor and me conversing, but Doctor Jones turning to him said, "O I remember this gentleman perfectly."

"Oh!" said the fast young man; "very good!" then flinging himself down in a chair with a force that nearly broke it and fixing his eyes upon me he said "I think I remember the gentleman too. If I am not much mistaken sir, you are one of our principal engineers at Wolverhampton. O yes! I remember you now perfectly. The last time I saw you was at a public dinner given to you at Wolverhampton, and there you made a speech, and a capital speech it was."

Just as I was about to reply Doctor Jones commenced speaking Welsh, resuming the discourse on Welsh literature. Before, however, he had uttered a dozen words he was interrupted by the Wolverhampton gent, who exclaimed in a blubbering tone: "O Lord, you are surely not

going to speak Welsh. If I had thought I was to be bothered with Welsh I wouldn't have asked you to come."

"If I spoke Welsh, sir," said the doctor, "it was out of compliment to this gentleman, who is a proficient in the ancient language of my country. As, however, you dislike Welsh, I shall carry on the conversation with him in English, though peradventure you may not be more edified by it in that language than if it were held in Welsh."

He then proceeded to make some very excellent remarks on the history of the Gwedir family, written by Sir John Wynn; to which the Wolverhampton gent listened with open mouth and staring eyes. My dinner now made its appearance, brought in by the little freckled maid—the cloth had been laid during my absence from the room. I had just begun to handle my knife and fork, Doctor Jones still continuing his observations on the history of the Gwedir family, when I heard a carriage drive up to the inn, and almost immediately after two or three young fellows rollicked into the room: "Come let's be

off" said one of them to the Wolverhampton gent; "the carriage is ready." "I'm glad of it," said the fast young man, "for it's rather slow work here. Come, doctor! are you going with us or do you intend to stay here all night?" Thereupon the doctor got up, and coming towards me, leaning on his cane, said: "Sir! it gives me infinite pleasure that I have met a second time a gentleman of so much literature. That we shall ever meet a third time I may wish but can scarcely hope, owing to certain ailments under which I suffer, brought on, sir, by a residence of many years in the Occidental Indies. However, at all events I wish you health and happiness." He then shook me gently by the hand and departed with the Wolverhampton gent and his companions; the gent as he stumped out of the room saying "Good night, sir; I hope it will not be long before I see you at another public dinner at Wolverhampton, and hear another speech from you as good as the last." In a minute or two I heard them drive off.

Left to myself I began to discuss my dinner. Of the dinner I had nothing to complain, but

the ale which accompanied it was very bad. This was the more mortifying, for remembering the excellent ale I had drunk at Bala some months previously I had, as I came along the gloomy roads the present evening, been promising myself a delicious treat on my arrival.

"This is very bad ale!" said I to the freckled maid, "very different from what I drank in the summer, when I was waited on by Tom Jenkins."

"It is the same ale, sir," said the maid, "but the last in the cask; and we shan't have any more for six months, when he will come again to brew for the summer; but we have very good porter, sir, and first-rate Allsopp."

"Allsopp's ale," said I, "will do for July and August, but scarcely for the end of October. However, bring me a pint; I prefer it at all times to porter."

My dinner concluded, I trifled away the time till about ten o'clock, and then went to bed.

CHAPTER V.

BREAKFAST.—THE FRECKLED MAID.—LLAN UWCH LLYN.—THE LANDLADY.—LLEWARCH HEN.—CONVERSIONS TO THE CHURCH.

AWAKING occasionally in the night I heard much storm and rain. The following morning was gloomy and lowering. As it was Sunday I determined to pass the day at Bala, and accordingly took my prayer book out of my satchel, and also my single white shirt, which I put on.

Having dressed myself I went to the coffee-room and sat down to breakfast. What a breakfast! pot of hare; ditto of trout; pot of prepared shrimps; dish of plain shrimps; tin of sardines; beautiful beef-steak; eggs, muffin; large loaf, and butter, not forgetting capital tea. There's a breakfast for you!

As the little freckled maid was removing the breakfast things I asked her how old she was.

"Eighteen, sir, last Candlemas," said the freckled maid.

"Are your parents alive?"

"My mother is, sir, but my father is dead."

"What was your father?"

"He was an Irishman, sir! and boots to this inn."

"Is your mother Irish?"

"No, sir, she is of this place; my father married her shortly after he came here."

"Of what religion are you?"

"Church, sir, church."

"Was your father of the church?"

"Not always, sir; he was once what is called a Cartholic. He turned to the church after he came here."

"A'n't there a great many Methodists in Bala?"

"Plenty, sir, plenty."

"How came your father not to go over to the Methodists instead of the Church?"

"'Cause he didn't like them, sir; he used to

say they were a trumpery, cheating set; that they wouldn't swear, but would lie through a three-inch board."

"I suppose your mother is a churchwoman?"

"She is now, sir; but before she knew my father she was a Methodist."

"Of what religion is the master of the house?"

"Church, sir, Church; so is all the family."

"Who is the clergyman of the place?"

"Mr. Pugh, sir!"

"Is he a good preacher?"

"Capital, sir! and so is each of his curates; he and they are convarting the Methodists left and right."

"I should like to hear him."

"Well, sir! that you can do. My master, who is going to church presently, will be happy to accommodate you in his pew."

I went to church with the landlord, a tall gentlemanly man of the name of Jones—O that eternal name of Jones! Rain was falling fast, and we were glad to hold up our umbrellas. We did not go to the church at Bala, at which

there was no service that morning, but to that of a little village close by, on the side of the lake, the living of which is incorporated with that of Bala. The church stands low down by the lake at the bottom of a little nook. Its name which is Llan uwch Llyn, is descriptive of its position, signifying the Church above the Lake. It is a long, low, ancient edifice, standing north-east by south-west. The village is just above it on a rising ground, behind which are lofty hills pleasantly dotted with groves, trees and houses. The interior of the edifice has a somewhat dilapidated appearance. The service was in Welsh. The clergyman was about forty years of age, and had a highly-intelligent look. His voice was remarkably clear and distinct. He preached an excellent practical sermon, text 14th chapter 22nd verse of Luke, about sending out servants to invite people to the supper. After the sermon there was a gathering for the poor.

As I returned to the inn I had a good deal of conversation with the landlord on religious subjects. He told me that the Church of England, which for a long time had been a down-trodden

Church in Wales, had of late begun to raise its head, and chiefly owing to the zeal and activity of its present ministers; that the former ministers of the Church were good men but had not energy enough to suit the times in which they lived; that the present ministers fought the Methodist preachers with their own weapon, namely extemporary preaching, and beat them, winning shoals from their congregations. He seemed to think that the time was not far distant when the Anglican Church would be the popular as well as the established church of Wales.

Finding myself rather dull in the inn I went out again notwithstanding that it rained. I ascended the toman or mound which I had visited on a former occasion. Nothing could be more desolate and dreary than the scene around. The woods were stript of their verdure and the hills were half shrouded in mist. How unlike was this scene to the smiling, glorious prospect which had greeted my eyes a few months before. The rain coming down with redoubled violence I was soon glad to descend and regain the inn.

Shortly before dinner I was visited by the

landlady, a fine tall woman of about fifty with considerable remains of beauty in her countenance. She came to ask me if I was comfortable. I told her that it was my own fault if I was not. We were soon in very friendly discourse. I asked her her maiden name.

"Owen," said she laughing, "which after my present name of Jones is the most common name in Wales."

"They were both one and the same originally," said I, "Owen and Jones both mean John."

She too was a staunch member of the Church of England, which she said was the only true church. She spoke in terms of high respect and admiration of her minister, and said that a new church was being built, the old one not being large enough to accommodate the numbers who thronged to hear him.

I had a noble goose for dinner to which I did ample justice. About four o'clock the weather having cleared up I took a stroll. It was a beautiful evening, though rain clouds still hovered about. I wandered to the northern end of Llyn Tegid which I had passed in the preceding even-

ing. The wind was blowing from the south, and tiny waves were beating against the shore which consisted of small brown pebbles. The lake has certainly not its name, which signifies Lake of Beauty, for nothing. It is a beautiful sheet of water, and beautifully situated. It is oblong and about six miles in length. On all sides except to the north, it is bounded by hills. Those at the southern end are very lofty, the tallest of which is Arran, which lifts its head to the clouds like a huge loaf. As I wandered on the strand I thought of a certain British prince and poet, who in the very old time sought a refuge in the vicinity of the lake from the rage of the Saxons. His name was Llewarch Hen, of whom I will now say a few words.

Llewarch Hen, or Llewarch the Aged, was born about the commencement of the sixth and died about the middle of the seventh century, having attained to the prodigious age of one hundred and forty or fifty years, which is perhaps the lot of about forty individuals in the course of a millennium. If he was remarkable for the number of his years he was no less so for the

number of his misfortunes. He was one of the princes of the Cumbrian Britons; but Cumbria was invaded by the Saxons, and a scene of horrid war ensued. Llewarch and his sons, of whom he had twenty-four, put themselves at the head of their forces, and in conjunction with the other Cumbrian princes made a brave but fruitless opposition to the invaders. Most of his sons were slain, and he himself with the remainder sought shelter in Powys in the hall of Cynddylan its prince. But the Saxon bills and bows found their way to Powys too. Cynddylan was slain, and with him the last of the sons of Llewarch, who, reft of his protector, retired to a hut by the side of the lake of Bala, where he lived the life of a recluse and composed elegies on his sons and slaughtered friends, and on his old age, all of which abound with so much simplicity and pathos that the heart of him must be hard indeed who can read them unmoved. Whilst a prince he was revered for his wisdom and equity, and he is said in one of the historical triads to have been one of the three consulting warriors of Arthur.

In the evening I attended service in the old

church at Bala. The interior of the edifice was remarkably plain; no ornament of any kind was distinguishable; the congregation was overflowing, amongst whom I observed the innkeeper and his wife, the little freckled maid and the boots. The entire service was in Welsh. Next to the pew in which I sat was one filled with young singing women, all of whom seemed to have voices of wonderful power. The prayers were read by a strapping young curate at least six feet high. The sermon was preached by the rector, and was a continuation of the one which I had heard him preach in the morning. It was a very comforting discourse, as the preacher clearly proved that every sinner will be pardoned who comes to Jesus. I was particularly struck with one part. The preacher said that Jesus' arms being stretched out upon the cross was emblematic of his surprising love and his willingness to receive anybody. The service concluded with the noble anthem Teyrnasa Jesu Mawr, "May Mighty Jesus reign!"

The service over I returned to the parlour of the inn. There I sat for a long time lone and

solitary, staring at the fire in the grate. I was the only guest in the house; a great silence prevailed both within and without; sometimes five minutes elapsed without my hearing a sound, and then perhaps the silence would be broken by a footstep at a distance in the street —at length finding myself yawning I determined to go to bed. The freckled maid as she lighted me to my room inquired how I liked the sermon: "Very much," said I. "Ah," said she, "did I not tell you that Mr. Pugh was a capital preacher?" She then asked me how I liked the singing of the gals who sat in the next pew to mine. I told her that I liked it exceedingly. "Ah!" said she, "them gals have the best voices in Bala. They were once Methody gals, and sang in the chapels, but were convarted, and are now as good Church as myself. Them gals have been the cause of a great many convarsions, for all the young fellows of their acquaintance amongst the Methodists——"

"Follow them to church," said I, "and in time become converted. That's a thing of course. If the Church gets the girls she is quite sure of the fellows."

CHAPTER VI.

PROCEED ON JOURNEY.—THE LAD AND DOG.—OLD BALA.—THE PASS.—EXTENSIVE VIEW.—THE TWO MEN.—THE TAP NYTH.—THE MEETING OF THE WATERS.—THE WILD VALLEY.—DINAS MAWDDWY.

THE Monday morning was gloomy and misty, but it did not rain, a circumstance which gave me no little pleasure, as I intended to continue my journey without delay. After breakfast I bade farewell to my kind hosts and also to the freckled maid, and departed, my satchel o'er my shoulder and my umbrella in my hand.

I had consulted the landlord on the previous day as to where I had best make my next halt, and had been advised by him to stop at Mallwyd. He said that if I felt tired I could put up at Dinas Mawddwy about two miles on this side of Mallwyd, but that if I were not he would advise me to go on, as I should find very poor accommodation at Dinas. On my inquir-

ing as to the nature of the road, he told me that the first part of it was tolerably good lying along the eastern side of the lake, but that the greater part of it was very rough, over hills and mountains, belonging to the great chain of Arran, which constituted upon the whole the wildest part of all Wales.

Passing by the northern end of the lake I turned to the south and proceeded along a road a little way above the side of the lake. The day had now to a certain extent cleared up, and the lake was occasionally gilded by beams of bright sunshine. After walking a little way I overtook a lad dressed in a white great coat and attended by a tolerably large black dog. I addressed him in English, but finding that he did not understand me I began to talk to him in Welsh.

"That's a fine dog," said I.

Lad.—Very fine, sir, and a good dog; though young, he has been known to kill rats.

Myself.—What is his name?

Lad.—His name is Toby, sir.

Myself.—And what is your name?

Lad.—John Jones, sir.

Myself.—And what is your father's?

Lad.—Waladr Jones, sir.

Myself.—Is Waladr the same as Cadwaladr?

Lad.—In truth, sir, it is.

Myself.—That is a fine name.

Lad.—It is, sir; I have heard my father say that it was the name of a king.

Myself.—What is your father?

Lad.—A farmer, sir.

Myself.—Does he farm his own land?

Lad.—He does not, sir; he is tenant to Mr. Price of Hiwlas.

Myself.—Do you live far from Bala?

Lad.—Not very far, sir.

Myself.—Are you going home now?

Lad.—I am not, sir; our home is on the other side of Bala. I am going to see a relation up the road.

Myself.—Bala is a nice place.

Lad.—It is, sir; but not so fine as old Bala.

Myself.—I never heard of such a place. Where is it?

Lad.—Under the lake, sir.

Myself.—What do you mean?

Lad.—It stood in the old time where the lake now is, and a fine city it was, full of fine houses, towers and castles, but with neither church nor chapel, for the people neither knew God nor cared for Him, and thought of nothing but singing and dancing and other wicked things. So God was angry with them, and one night when they were all busy at singing and dancing and the like, God gave the word and the city sank down into Unknown, and the lake boiled up where it once stood.

Myself.—That was a long time ago.

Lad.—In truth, sir, it was.

Myself.—Before the days of King Cadwaladr.

Lad.—I daresay it was, sir.

I walked fast, but the lad was a shrewd walker, and though incumbered with his great coat contrived to keep tolerably up with me. The road went over hill and dale, but upon the whole more upward than downward. After proceeding about an hour and a half we left the lake, to the southern extremity of which we had nearly come,

somewhat behind, and bore away to the south-east, gradually ascending. At length the lad pointing to a small farmhouse on the side of a hill told me he was bound thither, and presently bidding me farewell turned aside up a footpath which led towards it.

About a minute afterwards a small delicate furred creature with a white mark round its neck and with a little tail trailing on the ground ran swiftly across the road. It was a weasel or something of that genus; on observing it I was glad that the lad and the dog were gone, as between them they would probably have killed it. I hate to see poor wild animals persecuted and murdered, lose my appetite for dinner at hearing the screams of a hare pursued by greyhounds, and am silly enough to feel disgust and horror at the squeals of a rat in the fangs of a terrier, which one of the sporting tribe once told me were the sweetest sounds in "natur."

I crossed a bridge over a deep gulley which discharged its waters into a river in a valley on the right. Arran rose in great majesty on the farther side of this vale, its head partly shrouded

in mist. The day now became considerably overcast. I wandered on over much rough ground till I came to a collection of houses at the bottom of a pass leading up a steep mountain. Seeing the door of one of the houses open I peeped in, and a woman who was sitting knitting in the interior rose and came out to me. I asked the name of the place. The name which she told me sounded something like Tŷ Capel Saer—the House of the Chapel of the Carpenter. I inquired the name of the river in the valley. Cynllwyd, hoary-headed, she seemed to say; but here as well as with respect to her first answer I speak under correction, for her Welsh was what my old friends the Spaniards would call muy cerrado, that is close or indistinct. She asked me if I was going up the bwlch. I told her I was.

"Rather you than I," said she, looking up to the heavens which had assumed a very dismal, not to say awful appearance.

Presently I began to ascend the pass or bwlch, a green hill on my right intercepting the view of Arran, another very lofty hill on my

left with wood towards the summit. Coming to a little cottage which stood on the left I went to the door and knocked. A smiling young woman opened it, of whom I asked the name of the house.

"Tŷ Nant—the House of the Dingle," she replied.

"Do you live alone?" said I.

"No; mother lives here."

"Any Saesneg?"

"No," said she with a smile, "S'sneg of no use here."

Her face looked the picture of kindness, I was now indeed in Wales amongst the real Welsh. I went on some way. Suddenly there was a moaning sound, and rain came down in torrents. Seeing a deserted cottage on my left I went in. There was fodder in it, and it appeared to serve partly as a barn, partly as a cow-house. The rain poured upon the roof and I was glad I had found shelter. Close behind this place a small brook precipitated itself down rocks in four successive falls.

The rain having ceased I proceeded and after

a considerable time reached the top of the pass. From thence I had a view of the valley and lake of Bala, the lake looking like an immense sheet of steel. A round hill, however, somewhat intercepted the view of the latter. The scene in my immediate neighbourhood was very desolate; moory hillocks were all about me of a wretched russet colour; on my left, on the very crest of the hill up which I had so long been toiling, stood a black pyramid of turf, a pole on the top of it. The road now wore nearly due west down a steep descent. Arran was slightly to the north of me. I, however, soon lost sight of it, as I went down the farther side of the hill which lies over against it to the south-east. The sun, now descending, began to shine out. The pass down which I was now going was yet wilder than the one up which I had lately come. Close on my right was the steep hill's side out of which the road or path had been cut, which was here and there overhung by crags of wondrous forms; on my left was a very deep glen, beyond which was a black, precipitous, rocky wall, from a chasm near the top of which

tumbled with a rushing sound a slender brook seemingly the commencement of a mountain stream which hurried into a valley far below towards the west. When nearly at the bottom of the descent I stood still to look around me. Grand and wild was the scenery. On my left were noble green hills, the tops of which were beautifully gilded by the rays of the setting sun. On my right a black, gloomy, narrow valley or glen showed itself; two enormous craggy hills of immense altitude, one to the west and the other to the east of the entrance; that to the east terminating in a peak. The background to the north was a wall of rocks forming a semicircle, something like a bent bow with the head downward; behind this bow just in the middle, rose the black loaf of Arran. A torrent tumbled from the lower part of the semicircle, and after running for some distance to the south turned to the west, the way I was going.

Observing a house some little way within the gloomy vale I went towards it in the hope of finding somebody in it who could give me

information respecting this wild locality. As I drew near the door two tall men came forth, one about sixty, and the other about half that age. The elder had a sharp, keen look; the younger a lumpy and stupid one. They were dressed like farmers. On my saluting them in English the elder returned my salutation in that tongue, but in rather a gruff tone. The younger turned away his head and said nothing.

"What is the name of this house?" said I, pointing to the building.

"The name of it," said the old man, "is Tŷ Mawr."

"Do you live in it?" said I.

"Yes, I live in it."

"What waterfall is that?" said I, pointing to the torrent tumbling down the crag at the farther end of the gloomy vale.

"The fountain of the Royal Dyfi."

"Why do you call the Dyfy royal?" said I.

"Because it is the king of the rivers in these parts."

"Does the fountain come out of a rock?"

"It does not; it comes out of a lake, a llyn."

"Where is the llyn?"

"Over that crag, at the foot of Aran Vawr."

"Is it a large lake?"

"It is not; it is small."

"Deep?"

"Very."

"Strange things in it?"

"I believe dere are strange things in it." His English now became broken.

"Crocodiles?"

"I do not know what cracadailes be."

"Efync?"

"Ah! No I do not tink there be efync dere. Hu Gadarn in de old time kill de efync dere and in all de lakes in Wales. He draw them out of the water with his ychain banog his humpty oxen, and when he get dem out he burn deir bodies on de fire, he good man for dat."

"What do you call this allt?" said I, looking up to the high pinnacled hill on my right.

"I call that Tap Nyth yr Eryri."

"Is not that the top nest of the eagles?"

"I believe it is. Ha, I see you understand Welsh."

"A little," said I; "are there eagles there now?"

"No, no eagle now."

"Gone like avanc?"

"Yes, gone like avanc, but not so long. My father see eagle on Tap Nyth, but my father never see avanc in de llyn."

"How far to Dinas?"

"About three mile."

"Any thieves about?"

"No, no thieves here, but what come from England," and he looked at me with a strange, grim smile.

"What is become of the red-haired robbers of Mawddwy?"

"Ah," said the old man, staring at me, "I see you are a Cumro. The red-haired thieves of Mawddwy! I see you are from these parts."

"What's become of them?"

"Oh, dead, hung. Lived long time ago; long before eagle left Tap Nyth."

He spoke true. The red-haired banditti of Mawddwy were exterminated long before the conclusion of the sixteenth century, after having long been the terror not only of these wild regions but of the greater part of North Wales. They were called the red-haired banditti because certain leading individuals amongst them had red foxy hair.

"Is that young man your son?" said I, after a little pause.

"Yes, he my son."

"Has he any English?"

"No, he no English, but he plenty of Welsh —that is if he see reason."

I spoke to the young man in Welsh, asking him if he had ever been up to the Tap Nyth, but he made no answer.

"He no care for your question," said the old man; "ask him price of pig." I asked the young fellow the price of hogs, whereupon his face brightened up, and he not only answered

my question, but told me that he had a fat hog to sell. "Ha, ha," said the old man; "he plenty of Welsh now, for he see reason. To other question he no Welsh at all, no more than English, for he see no reason. What business he on Tap Nyth with eagle? His business down below in sty with pig. Ah, he look lump, but he no fool; know more about pig than you or I, or any one 'twixt here and Mahuncleth."

He now asked me where I came from, and on my telling him from Bala, his heart appeared to warm towards me, and saying that I must be tired, he asked me to step in and drink buttermilk, but I declined his offer with thanks, and bidding the two adieu returned to the road.

I hurried along and soon reached a valley which abounded with trees and grass; I crossed a bridge over a brook, not what the old man had called the Dyfi but the stream whose source I had seen high up the bwlch, and presently came to a place where the two waters joined. Just below the confluence on a fallen tree was seated a man decently dressed; his eyes were fixed on

the rushing stream. I stopped and spoke to him.

He had no English, but I found him a very sensible man. I talked to him about the source of the Dyfi. He said it was a disputed point which was the source. He himself was inclined to believe that it was the Pistyll up the bwlch. I asked him of what religion he was. He said he was of the Church of England, which was the Church of his father and his grandfather, and which he believed to be the only true Church. I inquired if it flourished. He said it did, but that it was dreadfully persecuted by all classes of dissenters, who though they were continually quarrelling with one another agreed in one thing namely to persecute the Church. I asked him if he ever read. He said he read a great deal, especially the works of Huw Morris, and that reading them had given him a love for the sights of nature. He added that his greatest delight was to come to the place where he then was, of an evening, and look at the waters and hills. I asked him what trade he was. "The trade of Joseph," said he smiling.

"Saer." "Farewell, brother," said I; "I am not a carpenter, but like you I read the works of Huw Morris and am of the Church of England." I then shook him by the hand and departed.

I passed a village with a stupendous mountain just behind it to the north, which I was told was called Moel Vrith or the party-coloured moel. I was now drawing near to the western end of the valley. Scenery of the wildest and most picturesque description was rife and plentiful to a degree: hills were here, hills were there; some tall and sharp, others huge and humpy; hills were on every side; only a slight opening to the west seemed to present itself. "What a valley!" I exclaimed. But on passing through the opening I found myself in another, wilder and stranger, if possible. Full to the west was a long hill rising up like the roof of a barn, an enormous round hill on its north-east side, and on its south-east the tail of the range which I had long had on my left—there were trees and groves and running waters, but all in deep shadow, for night was now close at hand.

"What is the name of this place?" I shouted

to a man on horseback, who came dashing through a brook with a woman in a Welsh dress behind him.

"Aber Cowarch, Saxon!" said the man in a deep guttural voice, and lashing his horse disappeared rapidly in the shades of night.

"Aber Cywarch!" I cried, springing half a yard into the air. "Why, that's the place where Ellis Wynn composed his immortal Sleeping Bard, the book which I translated in the blessed days of my youth. O no wonder that the Sleeping Bard is a wild and wondrous work, seeing that it was composed amidst the wild and wonderful scenes which I here behold."

I proceeded onwards up an ascent; after some time I came to a bridge across a stream which a man told me was called Avon Gerres. It runs into the Dyfi, coming down with a rushing sound from a wild vale to the north-east between the huge barn-like hill and Moel Vrith. The barn-like hill I was informed was called Pen Dyn. I soon reached Dinas Mawddwy which stands on the lower part of a high hill connected with the Pen Dyn. Dinas, though

at one time a place of considerable importance, if we may judge from its name which signifies a fortified city, is at present little more than a collection of filthy huts. But though a dirty squalid place, I found it anything but silent and deserted. Fierce-looking red-haired men, who seemed as if they might be descendants of the red-haired banditti of old, were staggering about, and sounds of drunken revelry echoed from the huts. I subsequently learned that Dinas was the head-quarters of miners, the neighbourhood abounding with mines both of lead and stone. I was glad to leave it behind me. Mallwyd is to the south of Dinas—the way to it is by a romantic gorge down which flows the Royal Dyfi. As I proceeded along this gorge the moon rising above Moel Vrith illumined my path. In about half-an-hour I found myself before the inn at Mallwyd.

CHAPTER VII.

INN AT MALLWYD.—A DIALOGUE.—THE CUMBO.

I ENTERED the inn and seeing a comely-looking damsel at the bar I told her that I was in need of supper and a bed. She conducted me into a neat sanded parlour where a good fire was blazing and asked me what I would have for supper. "Whatever you can most readily provide," said I; "I am not particular." The maid retired, and taking off my hat, and disencumbering myself of my satchel I sat down before the fire and fell into a doze, in which I dreamed of some of the wild scenes through which I had lately passed.

I dozed and dozed till I was roused by the maid touching me on the shoulder and telling

me that supper was ready. I got up and perceived that during my doze she had laid the cloth and put supper upon the table. It consisted of bacon and eggs. During supper I had some conversation with the maid.

Myself.—Are you a native of this place?

Maid. — I am not, sir; I come from Dinas.

Myself.—Are your parents alive?

Maid.—My mother is alive, sir, but my father is dead.

Myself.—Where does your mother live?

Maid.—At Dinas, sir.

Myself.—How does she support herself?

Maid.—By letting lodgings to miners, sir.

Myself.—Are the miners quiet lodgers?

Maid.—Not always, sir; sometimes they get up at night and fight with each other.

Myself.—What does your mother do on those occasions?

Maid.—She draws the quilt over her head, and says her prayers, sir.

Myself.—Why doesn't she get up and part them?

Maid.—Lest she should get a punch or a thwack for her trouble, sir.

Myself.—Of what religion are the miners?

Maid.—They are Methodists, if they are anything; but they don't trouble their heads much about religion.

Myself.—Of what religion are you?

Maid.—I am of the Church, sir.

Myself.—Did you always belong to the Church?

Maid.—Not always. When I was at Dinas I used to hear the preacher, but since I have been here I have listened to the clergyman.

Myself.—Is the clergyman here a good man?

Maid.—A very good man indeed, sir. He lives close by. Shall I go and tell him you want to speak to him?

Myself.—O dear me, no! He can employ his time much more usefully than in waiting upon me.

After supper I sat quiet for about an hour. Then ringing the bell I inquired of the maid whether there was a newspaper in the house. She told me there was not, but that she thought

she could procure me one. In a little time she brought me a newspaper, which she said she had borrowed at the parsonage. It was the "Cumro," an excellent Welsh journal written in the interest of the Church. In perusing its columns I passed a couple of hours very agreeably, and then went to bed.

CHAPTER VIII.

MALLWYD AND ITS CHURCH.—SONS OF SHOEMAKERS.—VILLAGE INN.—DOTTINGS.

THE next day was the thirty-first of October, and was rather fine for the season. As I did not intend to journey farther this day than Machynlleth, a principal town in Montgomeryshire, distant only twelve miles, I did not start from Mallwyd till just before noon.

Mallwyd is a small but pretty village. The church is a long edifice standing on a slight elevation on the left of the road. Its pulpit is illustrious from having for many years been occupied by one of the very celebrated men of Wales, namely Doctor John Davies, author of the great Welsh and Latin dictionary, an imperishable work. An immense yew tree grows

in the churchyard and partly overshadows the road with its branches. The parsonage stands about a hundred yards to the south of the church near a grove of firs. The village is overhung on the north by the mountains of the Arran range, from which it is separated by the murmuring Dyfi. To the south for many miles the country is not mountainous, but presents a pleasant variety of hill and dale.

After leaving the village a little way behind me I turned round to take a last view of the wonderful region from which I had emerged on the previous evening. Forming the two sides of the pass down which comes "the royal river" stood the Dinas mountain and Cefn Coch, the first on the left, and the other on the right. Behind, forming the back-ground of the pass, appearing, though now some miles distant, almost in my close proximity, stood Pen Dyn. This hill has various names, but the one which I have noted here and which signifies the head of a man, perhaps describes it best. From where I looked at it on that last day of October it certainly looked like an enormous

head, and put me in mind of the head of Mambrino mentioned in the master work which commemorates the achievements of the Manchegan knight. This mighty mountain is the birthplace of more than one river. If the Gerres issues from its eastern side, from its western springs the Maw that singularly picturesque stream, which enters the ocean at the place which Saxons corruptly call Barmouth and the Cumry with great propriety Aber Maw or the disemboguement of the Maw.

Just as I was about to pursue my journey two boys came up, bound in the same direction as myself. One was a large boy dressed in a waggoner's frock, the other was a little fellow in a brown coat and yellowish trowsers. As we walked along together I entered into conversation with them. They came from Dinas Mawddwy. The large boy told me that he was the son of a man who carted mwyn or lead ore, and the little fellow that he was the son of a shoemaker. The latter was by far the cleverest, and no wonder, for the sons of shoemakers are always clever, which assertion should anybody

doubt I beg him to attend the examinations at Cambridge, at which he will find that in three cases out of four the senior wranglers are the sons of shoe-makers. From this little chap I got a great deal of information about Pen Dyn, every part of which he appeared to have traversed. He told me amongst other things that there was a castle upon it. Like a true son of a shoemaker, however, he was an arch rogue. Coming to a small house with a garden attached to it in which there were apple-trees, he stopped, whilst I went on with the other boy, and after a minute or two came up running with a couple of apples in his hand.

"Where did you get those apples?" said I, "I hope you did not steal them."

He made no reply, but bit one, then making a wry face he flung it away, and so he served the other. Presently afterwards coming to a side lane, the future senior wrangler, for a senior wrangler he is destined to be, always provided he finds his way to Cambridge, darted down it like an arrow and disappeared.

I continued my way with the other lad,

occasionally asking him questions about the mines of Mawddwy. The information, however, which I obtained from him was next to nothing, for he appeared to be as heavy as the stuff which his father carted. At length we reached a village forming a kind of semicircle on a green which looked something like a small English common. To the east were beautiful green hills; to the west the valley with the river running through it, beyond which rose other green hills yet more beautiful than the eastern ones. I asked the lad the name of the place, but I could not catch what he said, for his answer was merely an indistinct mumble, and before I could question him again he left me, without a word of salutation, and trudged away across the green.

Descending a hill I came to a bridge under which ran a beautiful river, which came foaming down from a gulley between two of the eastern hills. From a man whom I met I learned that the bridge was called Pont Coomb Linau, and that the name of the village I had passed was Linau. The river carries an important tribute

to the Dyfi, at least it did when I saw it, though perhaps in summer it is little more than a dry water-course.

Half an hour's walking brought me from this place to a small town or large village, with a church at the entrance and the usual yew tree in the church-yard. Seeing a kind of inn I entered it and was shown by a lad-waiter into a large kitchen in which were several people. I had told him in Welsh that I wanted some ale, and as he opened the door he cried with a loud voice "Cumro!" as much as to say, Mind what you say before this chap, for he understands Cumraeg—that word was enough. The people, who were talking fast and eagerly as I made my appearance, instantly became silent and stared at me with most suspicious looks. I sat down and when my ale was brought I took a hearty draught, and observing that the company were still watching me suspiciously and maintaining the same suspicious silence, I determined to comport myself in a manner which should to a certain extent afford them ground for suspicion. I therefore slowly and deliberately drew

my note-book out of my waistcoat pocket, unclasped it, took my pencil from the loops at the side of the book, and forthwith began to dot down observations upon the room and company, now looking to the left, now to the right, now aloft, now alow, now skewing at an object, now leering at an individual, my eyes half closed and my mouth drawn considerably aside. Here follow some of my dottings:—

"A very comfortable kitchen with a chimney-corner on the south side—immense grate and brilliant fire—large kettle hanging over it by a chain attached to a transverse iron bar—a settle on the left-hand side of the fire—seven fine large men near the fire—two upon the settle, two upon chairs, one in the chimney-corner smoking a pipe, and two standing up—table near the settle with glasses, amongst which is that of myself, who sit nearly in the middle of the room a little way on the right-hand side of the fire.

"The floor is of slate; a fine brindled greyhound lies before it on the hearth, and a shepherd's dog wanders about, occasionally going to

the door and scratching as if anxious to get out. The company are dressed mostly in the same fashion, brown coats, broad-brimmed hats and yellowish corduroy breeches with gaiters. One who looks like a labouring man has a white smock and a white hat, patched trowsers, and highlows covered with gravel—one has a blue coat.

"There is a clock on the right-hand side of the kitchen; a warming-pan hangs close by it on the projecting side of the chimney-corner. On the same side is a large rack containing many plates and dishes of Staffordshire ware. Let me not forget a pair of fire-irons which hang on the right-hand side of the chimney-corner!"

I made a great many more dottings, which I shall not insert here. During the whole time I was dotting the most marvellous silence prevailed in the room, broken only by the occasional scratching of the dog against the inside of the door, the ticking of the clock, and the ruttling of the smoker's pipe in the chimney-corner. After I had dotted to my heart's con-

tent I closed my book, put the pencil into the loops, then the book into my pocket, drank what remained of my ale, got up, and, after another look at the apartment and its furniture and a leer at the company, departed from the house without ceremony, having paid for the ale when I received it. After walking some fifty yards down the street I turned half round and beheld, as I knew I should, the whole company at the door staring after me. I leered sideways at them for about half a minute, but they stood my leer stoutly. Suddenly I was inspired by a thought. Turning round I confronted them, and pulling my note-book out of my pocket, and seizing my pencil, I fell to dotting vigorously. That was too much for them. As if struck by a panic, my quondam friends turned round and bolted into the house; the rustic-looking man with the smock-frock and gravelled highlows nearly falling down in his eagerness to get in.

The name of the place where this adventure occurred was Cemmaes.

CHAPTER IX.

THE DEAF MAN.—FUNERAL PROCESSION.—THE LONE FAMILY.—THE WELSH AND THEIR SECRETS.—THE VALE OF THE DYFI.—THE BRIGHT MOON.

A LITTLE way from Cemmaes I saw a respectable-looking old man like a little farmer, to whom I said:

"How far to Machynlleth?"

Looking at me in a piteous manner in the face he pointed to the side of his head, and said

"Dim clywed."

It was no longer no English, but no hearing.

Presently I met one yet more deaf. A large procession of men came along the road. Some distance behind them was a band of women

and between the two bands was a kind of bier drawn by a horse with plumes at each of the four corners. I took off my hat and stood close against the hedge on the right-hand side till the dead had passed me some way to its final home.

Crossed a river, which like that on the other side of Cemmaes streamed down from a gulley between two hills into the valley of the Dyfi. Beyond the bridge on the right-hand side of the road was a pretty cottage, just as there was in the other locality. A fine tall woman stood at the door, with a little child beside her. I stopped and inquired in English whose body it was that had just been borne by.

"That of a young man, sir, the son of a farmer, who lives a mile or so up the road."

Myself.—He seems to have plenty of friends.

Woman.—O yes, sir, the Welsh have plenty of friends both in life and death.

Myself.—A'n't you Welsh, then?

Woman.—O no, sir, I am English, like yourself, as I suppose.

Myself.—Yes, I am English. What part of England do you come from?

Woman.—Shropshire, sir.

Myself.—Is that little child yours?

Woman.—Yes, sir, it is my husband's child and mine.

Myself.—I suppose your husband is Welsh.

Woman.—O no, sir, we are all English.

Myself.—And what is your husband?

Woman.—A little farmer, sir, he farms about forty acres under Mrs. ——.

Myself.—Well, are you comfortable here?

Woman.—O dear me, no, sir! we are anything but comfortable. Here we are three poor lone creatures in a strange land, without a soul to speak to but one another. Every day of our lives we wish we had never left Shropshire.

Myself.—Why don't you make friends amongst your neighbours?

Woman.—O, sir, the English cannot make friends amongst the Welsh. The Welsh won't neighbour with them, or have anything to do with them, except now and then in the way of business.

Myself.—I have occasionally found the Welsh very civil.

Woman.—O yes, sir, they can be civil enough to passers-by, especially those who they think want nothing from them—but if you came and settled amongst them you would find them, I'm afraid, quite the contrary.

Myself.—Would they be uncivil to me if I could speak Welsh?

Woman.—Most particularly, sir; the Welsh don't like any strangers, but least of all those who speak their language.

Myself.—Have you picked up anything of their language?

Woman.—Not a word, sir, nor my husband neither. They take good care that we shouldn't pick up a word of their language. I stood the other day and listened whilst two women were talking just where you stand now, in the hope of catching a word, and as soon as they saw me they passed to the other side of the bridge, and began buzzing there. My poor husband took it into his head that he might possibly learn a word or two at the public-house, so he went

there, called for a jug of ale and a pipe and tried to make himself at home just as he might in England, but it wouldn't do. The company instantly left off talking to one another and stared at him, and before he could finish his pot and pipe took themselves off to a man, and then came the landlord, and asked him what he meant by frightening away his customers. So my poor husband came home as pale as a sheet, and sitting down in a chair said "Lord have mercy upon me!"

Myself.—Why are the Welsh afraid that strangers should pick up their language?

Woman.—Lest, perhaps, they should learn their secrets, sir!

Myself.—What secrets have they?

Woman.—The Lord above only knows, sir!

Myself.—Do you think they are hatching treason against Queen Victoria?

Woman.—O dear no, sir.

Myself.—Is there much murder going on amongst them?

Woman.—Nothing of the kind, sir.

Myself.—Cattle-stealing?

Woman.—O no, sir!

Myself.—Pig-stealing?

Woman.—No, sir!

Myself.—Duck or hen stealing?

Woman.—Haven't lost a duck or hen since I have been here, sir.

Myself.—Then what secrets can they possibly have?

Woman.—I don't know, sir! perhaps none at all, or at most only a pack of small nonsense that nobody would give three farthings to know. However, it is quite certain they are as jealous of strangers hearing their discourse as if they were plotting gunpowder treason or something worse.

Myself.—Have you been long here?

Woman.—Only since last May, sir! and we hope to get away by next, and return to our own country, where we shall have some one to speak to.

Myself.—Good bye!

Woman.—Good bye, sir, and thank you for

your conversation; I haven't had such a treat of talk for many a weary day.

The Vale of the Dyfi became wider and more beautiful as I advanced. The river ran at the bottom amidst green and seemingly rich meadows. The hills on the farther side were cultivated a great way up, and various neat farmhouses were scattered here and there on their sides. At the foot of one of the most picturesque of these hills stood a large white village. I wished very much to know its name, but saw no one of whom I could inquire. I proceeded for about a mile, and then perceiving a man wheeling stones in a barrow for the repairing of the road I thought I would inquire of him. I did so, but the village was then out of sight, and though I pointed in its direction and described its situation I could not get its name out of him. At length I said hastily, "Can you tell me your own name?"

"Dafydd Tibbot, sir," said he.

"Tibbot, Tibbot," said I; "why, you are a Frenchman."

"Dearie me, sir," said the man looking very pleased, "am I indeed?"

"Yes, you are," said I, rather repenting of my haste, and giving him sixpence I left him.

"I'd bet a trifle," said I to myself, as I walked away, "that this poor creature is the descendant of some desperate Norman Tibault who helped to conquer Powisland under Roger de Montgomery or Earl Baldwin. How striking that the proud old Norman names are at present only borne by people in the lowest station. Here's a Tibbot or Tibault barrowing stones on a Welsh road, and I have known a Mortimer munching poor cheese and bread under a hedge on an English one. How can we account for this save by the supposition that the descendants of proud, cruel and violent men—and who so proud, cruel and violent as the old Normans—are doomed by God to come to the dogs?"

Came to Pont Velin Cerrig, the bridge of the mill of the Cerrig, a river which comes foaming down from between two rocky hills. This bridge is about a mile from Machynlleth, at

which place I arrived at about five o'clock in the evening—a cool, bright moon shining upon me. I put up at the principal inn, which was of course called the Wynstay Arms.

CHAPTER X.

WELSH POEMS.—SESSIONS BUSINESS.—THE LAWYER AND HIS CLIENT.—THE COURT.—THE TWO KEEPERS.—THE DEFENCE.

DURING supper I was waited upon by a brisk, buxom maid, who told me that her name was Mary Evans. The repast over I ordered a glass of whiskey-and-water, and when it was brought I asked the maid if she could procure me some book to read. She said she was not aware of any book in the house which she could lay her hand on except one of her own, which if I pleased she would lend me. I begged her to do so. Whereupon she went out and presently returned with a very small volume, which she laid on the table and then retired. After taking a sip of my whiskey-and-water I proceeded to examine it. It turned out to be a volume of Welsh poems entitled "Blodau Glyn Dyfi;" or, Flowers of Glyn Dyfi, by one Lewis Meredith,

whose poetical name is Lewis Glyn Dyfi. The author indites his preface from Cemmaes, June, 1852. The best piece is called Dyffryn Dyfi; and is descriptive of the scenery of the vale through which the Dyfi runs. It commences thus:

"Heddychol ddyffryn tlws,"
Peaceful, pretty vale,

and contains many lines breathing a spirit of genuine poetry.

The next day I did not get up till nine, having no journey before me, as I intended to pass that day at Machynlleth. When I went down to the parlour I found another guest there, breakfasting. He was a tall, burly, and clever-looking man of about thirty-five. As we breakfasted together at the same table we entered into conversation. I learned from him that he was an attorney from a town at some distance, and was come over to Machynlleth to the petty sessions, to be held that day, in order to defend a person accused of spearing a salmon in the river. I asked him who his client was.

"A farmer," said he, "a tenant of Lord

V——, who will probably preside over the bench which will try the affair."

"O," said I, "a tenant spearing his landlord's fish—that's bad."

"No," said he, "the fish which he speared, that is, which he is accused of spearing, did not belong to his landlord but to another person; he hires land of Lord V——, but the fishing of the river which runs through that land belongs to Sir Watkin."

"O, then," said I, "supposing he did spear the salmon I shan't break my heart if you get him off: do you think you shall?"

"I don't know," said he. "There's the evidence of two keepers against him; one of whom I hope, however, to make appear a scoundrel, in whose oath the slightest confidence is not to be placed. I shouldn't wonder if I make my client appear a persecuted lamb. The worst is, that he has the character of being rather fond of fish, indeed of having speared more salmon than any other six individuals in the neighbourhood."

"I really should like to see him," said I;

"what kind of person is he? some fine, desperate-looking fellow, I suppose?"

"You will see him presently," said the lawyer; "he is in the passage, waiting till I call him in to take some instructions from him; and I think I had better do so now, for I have breakfasted, and time is wearing away."

He then got up, took some papers out of a carpet bag, sat down, and after glancing at them for a minute or two, went to the door and called to somebody in Welsh to come in. Forthwith in came a small, mean, wizzened-faced man of about sixty, dressed in a black coat and hat, drab breeches and gaiters, and looking more like a decayed Methodist preacher than a spearer of imperial salmon.

"Well," said the attorney, "this is my client, what do you think of him?"

"He is rather a different person from what I had expected to see," said I; "but let us mind what we say, or we shall offend him."

"Not we," said the attorney; "that is, unless we speak Welsh, for he understands not a word of any other language."

Then sitting down at the farther table he

said to his client in Welsh: "Now Mr. So-and-so, have you learnt anything more about that first keeper?"

The client bent down, and placing both his hands upon the table began to whisper in Welsh to his professional adviser. Not wishing to hear any of their conversation I finished my breakfast as soon as possible and left the room. Going into the inn-yard I had a great deal of learned discourse with an old ostler about the glanders in horses. From the inn-yard I went to my own private room and made some dottings in my note-book, and then went down again to the parlour which I found unoccupied. After sitting some time before the fire I got up, and strolling out presently came to a kind of market-place, in the middle of which stood an old-fashioned-looking edifice supported on pillars. Seeing a crowd standing round it I asked what was the matter, and was told that the magistrates were sitting in the town-hall above, and that a grand poaching-case was about to be tried. "I may as well go and hear it," said I.

Ascending a flight of steps I found myself in

the hall of justice in the presence of the magistrates and amidst a great many people, amongst whom I observed my friend the attorney and his client. The magistrates upon the whole were rather a fine body of men. Lord V— was in the chair, a highly intelligent-looking person, with fresh complexion, hooked nose and dark hair. A policeman very civilly procured me a commodious seat. I had scarcely taken possession of it when the poaching case was brought forward. The first witness against the accused was a fellow dressed in a dirty snuff-coloured suit, with a debauched look and having much the appearance of a town shack. He deposed that he was a hired keeper, and went with another to watch the river at about four o'clock in the morning; that they placed themselves behind a bush, and that a little before daylight they saw the farmer drive some cattle across the river. He was attended by a dog. Suddenly they saw him put a spear upon a stick which he had in his hand, run back to the river, and plunging the spear in, after a struggle pull out a salmon; that they then ran forward, and he himself asked the farmer

what he was doing, whereupon the farmer flung the salmon and spear into the river and said that if he did not take himself off he would fling him in too. The attorney then got up and began to cross-question him. "How long have you been a keeper?"

"About a fortnight."

"What do you get a week?"

"Ten shillings."

"Have you not lately been in London?"

"I have."

"What induced you to go to London?"

"The hope of bettering my condition."

"Were you not driven out of Machynlleth?"

"I was not."

"Why did you leave London?"

"Because I could get no work, and my wife did not like the place."

"Did you obtain possession of the salmon and the spear?"

"I did not."

"Why didn't you?"

"The pool was deep where the salmon was

struck, and I was not going to lose my life by going into it."

"How deep was it?"

"Over the tops of the houses," said the fellow, lifting up his hands.

The other keeper then came forward; he was brother to the former, but had much more the appearance of a keeper, being rather a fine fellow and dressed in a wholesome, well-worn suit of velveteen. He had no English, and what he said was translated by a sworn interpreter. He gave the same evidence as his brother about watching behind the bush, and seeing the farmer strike a salmon. When cross-questioned, however, he said that no words passed between the farmer and his brother, at least, that he heard. The evidence for the prosecution being given my friend the attorney entered upon the defence. He said that he hoped the court were not going to convict his client, one of the most respectable farmers in the county, on the evidence of two such fellows as the keepers, one of whom was a well-known bad one, who for his evil deeds had been driven from Machynlleth to London,

and from London back again to Machynlleth, and the other, who was his brother, a fellow not much better and who moreover could not speak a word of English—the honest lawyer forgetting no doubt that his own client had just as little English as the keeper. He repeated that he hoped the court would not convict his respectable client on the evidence of these fellows, more especially as they flatly contradicted each other in one material point, one saying that words had passed between the farmer and himself, and the other that no words at all had passed, and were unable to corroborate their testimony by anything visible or tangible. If his client speared the salmon and then flung the salmon with the spear sticking in its body into the pool, why didn't they go into the pool and recover the spear and salmon? They might have done so with perfect safety, there being an old proverb —he need not repeat it—which would have secured them from drowning had the pool been not merely over the tops of the houses but over the tops of the steeples. But he would waive all the advantage which his client derived from

the evil character of the witnesses, the discrepancy of their evidence, and their not producing the spear and salmon in court. He would rest the issue of the affair with confidence, on one argument, on one question; it was this. Would any man in his senses—and it was well known that his client was a very sensible man—spear a salmon not his own, when he saw two keepers close at hand watching him—staring at him? Here the chairman observed that there was no proof that he saw them—that they were behind a bush. But my friend the attorney very properly, having the interest of his client and his own character for consistency in view, stuck to what he had said, and insisted that the farmer must have seen them, and he went on reiterating that he must have seen them, notwithstanding that several magistrates shook their heads.

Just as he was about to sit down I moved up behind him and whispered: "Why don't you mention the dog? Wouldn't the dog have been likely to have scented the fellows out even if they had been behind the bush?"

He looked at me for a moment and then said

with a kind of sigh: "No, no! twenty dogs would be of no use here. It's no go—I shall leave the case as it is."

The court was cleared for a time, and when the audience were again admitted Lord V—— said that the Bench found the prisoner guilty; that they had taken into consideration what his counsel had said in his defence, but that they could come to no other conclusion, more especially as the accused was known to have been frequently guilty of similar offences. They fined him four pounds, including costs.

As the people were going out I said to the farmer in Welsh: "A bad affair this."

"Drwg iawn—very bad indeed," he replied.

"Did those fellows speak truth?" said I.

"Nage—Dim ond celwydd—not they! nothing but lies."

"Dear me!" said I to myself, "what an ill-treated individual!"

CHAPTER XI.

MACHYNLLETH.—REMARKABLE EVENTS.—ODE TO GLENDOWER.—DAFYDD GAM.—LAWDDEN'S HATCHET.

MACHYNLLETH, pronounced Machuncleth, is one of the principal towns of the district which the English call Montgomeryshire, and the Welsh Shire Trefaldwyn or the Shire of Baldwin's town, Trefaldwyn or the town of Baldwin being the Welsh name for the town which is generally termed Montgomery. It is situated in nearly the centre of the valley of the Dyfi amidst pleasant green meadows, having to the north the river, from which, however, it is separated by a gentle hill. It possesses a stately church, parts of which are of considerable antiquity, and one or two good streets. It is a thoroughly Welsh town, and the inhabit-

ants, who amount in number to about four thousand, speak the ancient British language with considerable purity.

Machynlleth has been the scene of remarkable events and is connected with remarkable names, some of which have rung through the world. At Machynlleth in 1402 Owen Glendower, after several brilliant victories over the English, held a parliament in a house which is yet to be seen in the Eastern Street, and was formally crowned King of Wales; in his retinue was the venerable bard Iolo Goch, who imagining that he now saw the old prophecy fulfilled, namely that a prince of the race of Cadwaladr should rule the Britons, after emancipating them from the Saxon yoke, greeted the chieftain with an ode to the following effect:—

Here's the life I've sigh'd for long:
Abash'd is now the Saxon throng,
And Britons have a British lord
Whose emblem is the conquering sword;
There's none I trow but knows him well
The hero of the watery dell,
Owain of bloody spear in field,
Owain his country's strongest shield;
A sovereign bright in grandeur drest,
Whose frown affrights the bravest breast.

Let from the world upsoar on high
A voice of splendid prophecy !
All praise to him who forth doth stand
To 'venge his injured native land !
Of him, of him a lay I'll frame
Shall bear through countless years his name :
In him are blended portents three,
Their glories blended sung shall be :
There's Owain meteor of the glen,
The head of princely generous men ;
Owain the lord of trenchant steel,
Who makes the hostile squadrons reel ;
Owain beside of warlike look,
A conqueror who no stay will brook ;
Hail to the lion leader gay,
Marshaller of Griffith's war array ;
The scourger of the flattering race,
For them a dagger has his face ;
Each traitor false he loves to smite,
A lion is he for deeds of might ;
Soon may he tear, like lion grim,
All the Lloegrians limb from limb !
May God and Rome's blest father high
Deck him in surest panoply !
Hail to the valiant carnager,
Worthy three diadems to bear !
Hail to the valley's belted king !
Hail to the widely conquering,
The liberal, hospitable, kind,
Trusty and keen as steel refined !
Vigorous of form he nations bows,
Whilst from his breast-plate bounty flows.
Of Horsa's seed on hill and plain
Four hundred thousand he has slain.
The cope-stone of our nation's he,
In him our weal, our all we see ;
Though calm he looks his plans when breeding,
Yet oaks he'd break his clans when leading.

Hail to this partisan of war,
This bursting meteor flaming far!
Where'er he wends Saint Peter guard him,
And may the Lord five lives award him!

To Machynlleth on the occasion of the parliament came Dafydd Gam, so celebrated in after time; not, however, with the view of entering into the counsels of Glendower, or of doing him homage, but of assassinating him. This man whose surname Gam signifies crooked, was a petty chieftain of Breconshire. He was small of stature and deformed in person, though possessed of great strength. He was very sensitive of injury, though quite as alive to kindness; a thorough-going enemy and a thorough-going friend. In the earlier part of his life he had been driven from his own country for killing a man, called Big Richard of Slwch, in the High Street of Aber Honddu or Brecon, and had found refuge in England and kind treatment in the house of John of Gaunt, for whose son Henry, generally called Bolingbroke, he formed one of his violent friendships. Bolingbroke, on becoming King Henry the Fourth, not only restored

the crooked little Welshman to his possessions, but gave him employments of great trust and profit in Herefordshire. The insurrection of Glendower against Henry was quite sufficient to kindle against him the deadly hatred of Dafydd, who swore "by the nails of God" that he would stab his countryman for daring to rebel against his friend King Henry, the son of the man who had received him in his house and comforted him, when his own countrymen were threatening his destruction. He therefore went to Machynlleth with the full intention of stabbing Glendower, perfectly indifferent as to what might subsequently be his own fate. Glendower, however, who had heard of his threat, caused him to be seized and conducted in chains to a prison which he had in the mountains of Sycharth. Shortly afterwards, passing through Breconshire with his host, he burnt Dafydd's house, a fair edifice called the Cyrnigwen, situated on a hillock, near the river Honddu, to the ground, and seeing one of Gam's dependents gazing mournfully on the smouldering ruins he uttered the following taunting englyn:—

"Shouldst thou a little red man descry
Asking about his dwelling fair,
Tell him it under the bank doth lie,
And its brow the mark of the coal doth bear."

Dafydd remained confined till the fall of Glendower, shortly after which event he followed Henry the Fifth to France, where he achieved that glory which will ever bloom, dying covered with wounds in the field of Agincourt after saving the life of the king, to whom in the dreadest and most critical moment of the fight he stuck closer than a brother, not from any abstract feeling of loyalty, but from the consideration that King Henry the Fifth was the son of King Henry the Fourth, who was the son of the man who received and comforted him in his house, after his own countrymen had hunted him from house and land.

Connected with Machynlleth is a name not so widely celebrated as those of Glendower and Dafydd Gam, but well known to and cherished by the lovers of Welsh song. It is that of Lawdden, a Welsh bard in holy orders, who officiated as priest at Machynlleth from 1440 to 1460. But though Machynlleth was his place

of residence for many years it was not the place of his birth, Llychwr in Carmarthenshire being the spot where he first saw the light. He was an excellent poet and displayed in his compositions such elegance of language, and such a knowledge of prosody, that it was customary long after his death, when any master-piece of vocal song or eloquence was produced, to say that it bore the traces of Lawdden's hatchet. At the request of Griffith ap Nicholas, a powerful chieftain of South Wales, and a great patron of the muse, he drew up a statute relating to poets and poetry, and at the great Eisteddfod, or poetical congress, held at Carmarthen in the year 1450, under the auspices of Griffith, which was attended by the most celebrated bards of the north and south, he officiated as judge in conjunction with the chieftain upon the compositions of the bards who competed for the prize, a little silver chair. Not without reason therefore do the inhabitants of Machynlleth consider the residence of such a man within their walls, though at a far by-gone period, as conferring a

lustre on their town, and Lewis Meredith has probability on his side when in his pretty poem on Glen Dyfi he says :—

"Whilst fair Machynlleth decks thy quiet plain
Conjoined with it shall Lawdden's name remain."

CHAPTER XII.

THE OLD OSTLER.—DIRECTIONS.—CHURCH OF ENGLAND MAN.—THE DEEP DINGLE.—THE TWO WOMEN.—THE CUTTY PIPE.—WAEN Y BWLCH.—THE DEAF AND DUMB.—THE GLAZED HAT.

I ROSE on the morning of the 2nd of November intending to proceed to the Devil's Bridge, where I proposed halting a day or two in order that I might have an opportunity of surveying the far-famed scenery of that locality. After paying my bill I went into the yard to my friend the old ostler, to make enquiries with respect to the road.

"What kind of road," said I, "is it to the Devil's Bridge?"

"There are two roads, sir, to the Pont y Gwr Drwg; which do you mean to take?"

"Why do you call the Devil's Bridge the Pont y Gwr Drwg, or the bridge of the evil man?"

"That we may not bring a certain gentleman

upon us, sir, who doesn't like to have his name taken in vain."

"Is there much difference between the roads?"

"A great deal, sir; one is over the hills, and the other round by the valleys."

"Which is the shortest?"

"O, that over the hills, sir; it is about twenty miles from here to the Pont y Gwr Drwg over the hills, but more than twice that by the valleys."

"Well, I suppose you would advise me to go by the hills?"

"Certainly, sir. That is, if you wish to break your neck, or to sink in a bog, or to lose your way, or perhaps, if night comes on, to meet the Gwr Drwg himself taking a stroll. But to talk soberly. The way over the hills is an awful road, and indeed for the greater part is no road at all."

"Well, I shall go by it. Can't you give me some directions?"

"I'll do my best, sir, but I tell you again that the road is a horrible one, and very hard to find."

He then went with me to the gate of the inn, where he began to give me directions, pointing to the south, and mentioning some names of places through which I must pass, amongst which were Waen y Bwlch and Long Bones; at length he mentioned Pont Erwyd, and said: "If you can but get there you are all right, for from thence there is a very fair road to the bridge of the evil man. Though I dare say if you get to Pont Erwyd—and I wish you may get there—you will have had enough of it and will stay there for the night, more especially as there is a good inn."

Leaving Machynlleth I ascended a steep hill which rises to the south of it. From the top of this hill there is a fine view of the town, the river and the whole valley of the Dyfi. After stopping for a few minutes to enjoy the prospect I went on. The road at first was exceedingly good; though up and down, and making frequent turnings. The scenery was beautiful to a degree, lofty hills were on either side clothed most luxuriantly with trees of various kinds, but principally oaks. "This is really very pleasant," said

I, "but I suppose it is too good to last long." However, I went on for a considerable way, the road neither deteriorating nor the scenery decreasing in beauty; "surely I can't be in the right road," said I; "I wish I had an opportunity of asking." Presently seeing an old man working with a spade in a field near a gate, I stopped and said in Welsh: "Am I in the road to the Pont y Gwr Drwg?" The old man looked at me for a moment, then shouldering his spade he came up to the gate, and said in English: "In truth, sir, you are."

"I was told that the road thither was a very bad one," said I, "but this is quite the contrary."

"This road does not go much farther, sir," said he; "it was made to accommodate grand folks who live about here."

"You speak very good English," said I, "where did you get it?"

He looked pleased and said that in his youth he had lived some years in England.

"Can you read?" said I.

"O yes," said he, "both Welsh and English"

"What have you read in Welsh?" said I.

"The Bible and Twm O'r Nant."

"What pieces of Twm O'r Nant have you read?"

"I have read two of his interludes and his life."

"And which do you like best—his life or his interludes?"

"O, I like his life best."

"And what part of his life do you like best?"

"O, I like that part best where he gets the ship into the water at Abermarlais."

"You have a good judgment," said I; "his life is better than his interludes, and the best part of his life is where he describes his getting the ship into the water. But do the Methodists about here in general read Twm O'r Nant?"

"I don't know," said he; "I am no Methodist."

"Do you belong to the Church?"

"I do."

"And why do you belong to the Church?"

"Because I believe it is the best religion to get to heaven by."

"I am much of your opinion," said I. "Are there many Church-people about here?"

"Not many," said he, "but more than when I was young."

"How old are you?"

"Sixty-nine."

"You are not very old," said I.

"An't I? I only want one year of fulfilling my proper time on earth."

"You take things very easily," said I.

"Not so very easily, sir; I have often my quakings and fears, but then I read my Bible, say my prayers, and find hope and comfort."

"I really am very glad to have seen you," said I; "and now can you tell me the way to the bridge?"

"Not exactly, sir, for I have never been there, but you must follow this road some way farther, and then bear away to the right along yon hill"—and he pointed to a distant mountain.

I thanked him, and proceeded on my way.

I passed through a deep dingle and shortly afterwards came to the termination of the road; remembering, however, the directions of the old man, I bore away to the right making for the distant mountain. My course lay now over very broken ground, where there was no path, at least that I could perceive. I wandered on for some time; at length on turning round a bluff I saw a lad tending a small herd of bullocks. "Am I in the road?" said I, "to the Pont y Gwr Drwg?"

"Nis gwn! I don't know," said he sullenly. "I am a hired servant, and have only been here a little time."

"Where's the house," said I, "where you serve?"

But as he made no answer I left him. Some way farther on I saw a house on my left, a little way down the side of a deep dingle which was partly overhung with trees, and at the bottom of which a brook murmured. Descending a steep path I knocked at the door. After a little time it was opened, and two women appeared, one behind the other. The first was about

sixty; she was very powerfully made, had stern grey eyes and harsh features, and was dressed in the ancient Welsh female fashion, having a kind of riding-habit of blue and a high conical hat like that of the Tyrol. The other seemed about twenty years younger; she had dark features, was dressed like the other, but had no hat. I saluted the first in English, and asked her the way to the Bridge. Whereupon she uttered a deep guttural "augh" and turned away her head, seemingly in abhorrence. I then spoke to her in Welsh, saying I was a foreign man—I did not say a Saxon—was bound to the Devil's Bridge, and wanted to know the way. The old woman surveyed me sternly for some time, then turned to the other and said something, and the two began to talk to each other, but in a low buzzing tone, so that I could not distinguish a word. In about half a minute the eldest turned to me, and extending her arm, and spreading out her five fingers wide, motioned to the side of the hill in the direction which I had been following.

"If I go that way shall I get to the bridge

of the evil man?" said I; but got no other answer than a furious grimace and violent agitations of the arm and fingers in the same direction. I turned away, and scarcely had I done so when the door was slammed to behind me with great force, and I heard two "aughs," one not quite so deep and abhorrent as the other, probably proceeding from the throat of the younger female.

"Two regular Saxon-hating Welsh women," said I, philosophically; "just of the same sort no doubt as those who played such pranks on the slain bodies of the English soldiers, after the victory achieved by Glendower over Mortimer on the Severn's side."

I proceeded in the direction indicated, winding round the side of the hill, the same mountain which the old man had pointed out to me some time before. At length on making a turn I saw a very lofty mountain in the far distance to the south-west, a hill right before me to the south, and on my left a meadow overhung by the southern hill, in the middle of which stood a house from which

proceeded a violent barking of dogs. I would fain have made immediately up to it for the purpose of inquiring my way, but saw no means of doing so, a high precipitous bank lying between it and me. I went forward and ascended the side of the hill before me, and presently came to a path running east and west. I followed it a little way towards the east. I was now just above the house and saw some children and some dogs standing beside it. Suddenly I found myself close to a man who stood in a hollow part of the road from which a narrow path led down to the house; a donkey with panniers stood beside him. He was about fifty years of age, with a carbuncled countenance, high but narrow forehead, grey eyebrows, and small malignant grey eyes. He had a white hat with narrow eaves and the crown partly knocked out, a torn blue coat, corduroy breeches, long stockings and highlows. He was sucking a cutty pipe, but seemed unable to extract any smoke from it. He had all the appearance of a vagabond, and of a rather dangerous vagabond. I nodded to him and asked him in Welsh the

name of the place. He glared at me malignantly, then taking the pipe out of his mouth said that he did not know, that he had been down below to inquire and light his pipe, but could get neither light nor answer from the children. I asked him where he came from, but he evaded the question by asking where I was going to.

"To the Pont y Gwr Drwg," said I.

He then asked me if I was an Englishman.

"O yes!" said I, "I am Carn Sais;" whereupon with a strange mixture in his face of malignity and contempt, he answered in English that he didn't understand me.

"You understood me very well," said I without changing my language, "till I told you I was an Englishman. Harkee, man with the broken hat, you are one of the bad Welsh who don't like the English to know the language lest they should discover your lies and rogueries." He evidently understood what I said, for he gnashed his teeth though he said nothing. "Well," said I, "I shall go down to those children and inquire the name of the house," and I forthwith began to

descend the path, the fellow uttering a contemptuous "humph" behind me, as much as to say, much you'll make out down there. I soon reached the bottom and advanced towards the house. The dogs had all along been barking violently; as I drew near to them, however, they ceased, and two of the largest came forward wagging their tails. "The dogs were not barking at me," said I, "but at that vagabond above." I went up to the children; they were four in number, two boys and two girls, all red-haired, but tolerably good-looking. They had neither shoes nor stockings. "What is the name of this house?" said I to the eldest, a boy about seven years old. He looked at me, but made no answer. I repeated my question; still there was no answer, but methought I heard a humph of triumph from the hill. "Don't crow quite yet, old chap," thought I to myself, and putting my hand into my pocket, I took out a penny; and offering it to the child said: "Now, small man, Peth yw y enw y lle hwn?" Instantly the boy's face became intelligent, and putting out a fat little hand, he took the ceiniog, and

said in an audible whisper, "Waen y Bwlch." "I am all right," said I to myself, "that is one of the names of the places which the old ostler said I must go through." Then addressing myself to the child I said: "Where's your father and mother?"

"Out on the hill," whispered the child.

"What's your father?"

"A shepherd."

"Good;" said I. "Now can you tell me the way to the bridge of the evil man?" But the features became blank, the finger was put to the mouth, and the head was hung down. That question was evidently beyond the child's capacity. "Thank you!" said I, and turning round I regained the path on the top of the bank. The fellow and his donkey were still there. "I had no difficulty," said I, "in obtaining information; the place's name is Waen y Bwlch. But oes genoch dim Cumraeg—you have no Welsh." Thereupon I proceeded along the path in the direction of the east. Forthwith the fellow said something to his animal, and both came following fast behind. I quickened my

pace, but the fellow and his beast were close in my rear. Presently I came to a place where another path branched off to the south. I stopped, looked at it, and then went on, but scarcely had done so when I heard another exulting "humph" behind. "I am going wrong," said I to myself; "that other path is the way to the Devil's Bridge, and the scamp knows it or he would not have grunted." Forthwith I faced round, and brushing past the fellow without a word turned into the other path and hurried along it. By a side glance which I cast I could see him staring after me; presently, however, he uttered a sound very much like a Welsh curse, and kicking his beast proceeded on his way, and I saw no more of him. In a little time I came to a slough which crossed the path. I did not like the look of it at all; and to avoid it ventured upon some green mossy-looking ground to the left, and had scarcely done so when I found myself immersed to the knees in a bog. I, however, pushed forward and with some difficulty got to the path on the other side of the slough. I followed the path and in about half-an-hour

saw what appeared to be houses at a distance. "God grant that I may be drawing near some inhabited place," said I. The path now grew very miry, and there were pools of water on either side. I moved along slowly. At length I came to a place where some men were busy in erecting a kind of building. I went up to the nearest and asked him the name of the place. He had a crow-bar in his hand, was half naked, had a wry mouth and only one eye. He made me no answer, but mowed and gibbered at me.

"For God's sake," said I, "don't do so, but tell me where I am!" He still uttered no word, but mowed and gibbered yet more frightfully than before. As I stood staring at him another man came to me and said in broken English: "It is of no use speaking to him, sir, he is deaf and dumb."

"I am glad he is no worse," said I, "for I really thought he was possessed with the evil one. My good person, can you tell me the name of this place?"

"Esgyrn Hirion, sir," said he.

"Esgyrn Hirion," said I to myself; "Esgyrn

means bones, and Hirion means long. I am doubtless at the place which the old ostler called Long Bones. I shouldn't wonder if I get to the Devil's Bridge to-night after all." I then asked the man if he could tell me the way to the bridge of the evil man, but he shook his head and said that he had never heard of such a place, adding, however, that he would go with me to one of the overseers who could perhaps direct me. He then proceeded towards a row of buildings which were in fact those objects which I had guessed to be houses in the distance. He led me to a corner house at the door of which stood a middle-aged man, dressed in a grey coat, and saying to me, "This person is an overseer," returned to his labour. I went up to the man and saluting him in English asked whether he could direct me to the devil's bridge or rather to Pont Erwyd.

"It would be of no use directing you, sir," said he, "for with all the directions in the world it would be impossible for you to find the way. You would not have left these premises five minutes before you would be in a maze

without knowing which way to turn. Where do you come from?"

"From Machynlleth," I replied.

"From Machynlleth!" said he. "Well, I only wonder you ever got here, but it would be madness to go farther alone."

"Well," said I, "can I obtain a guide?"

"I really don't know," said he; "I am afraid all the men are engaged."

As we were speaking a young man made his appearance at the door from the interior of the house. He was dressed in a brown short coat, had a glazed hat on his head, and had a pale but very intelligent countenance.

"What is the matter?" said he to the other man.

"This gentleman," replied the latter, "is going to Pont Erwyd, and wants a guide."

"Well," said the young man, "we must find him one. It will never do to let him go by himself."

"If you can find me a guide," said I, "I shall be happy to pay him for his trouble."

"O, you can do as you please about that,"

said the young man; "but, pay or not, we would never suffer you to leave this place without a guide, and as much for our own sake as yours, for the directors of the company would never forgive us if they heard we had suffered a gentleman to leave these premises without a guide, more especially if he were lost, as it is a hundred to one you would be, if you went by yourself."

"Pray," said I, "what company is this, the directors of which are so solicitous about the safety of strangers?"

"The Potosi Mining Company," said he, "the richest in all Wales. But pray walk in and sit down, for you must be tired."

CHAPTER XIII.

THE MINING COMPTING ROOM.—NATIVE OF ABERYSTWYTH.—STORY OF A BLOODHOUND.—THE YOUNG GIRLS.—THE MINER'S TALE.—GWEN FRWD.—THE TERFYN.

I FOLLOWED the young man with the glazed hat into a room, the other man following behind me. He of the glazed hat made me sit down before a turf fire, apologizing for its smoking very much. The room seemed half compting room half apartment. There was a wooden desk with a ledger upon it by the window which looked to the west, and a camp bedstead extended from the southern wall nearly up to the desk. After I had sat for about a minute the young man asked me if I would take any refreshment. I thanked him for his kind offer which I declined, saying, however, that if he would obtain me a guide I should feel much

obliged. He turned to the other man and told him to go and inquire whether there was any one who would be willing to go. The other nodded, and forthwith went out.

"You think, then," said I, "that I could not find the way by myself?"

"I am sure of it," said he, "for even the people best acquainted with the country frequently lose their way. But I must tell you that if we do find you a guide it will probably be one who has no English."

"Never mind," said I, "I have enough Welsh to hold a common discourse."

A fine girl about fourteen now came in, and began bustling about.

"Who is this young lady?" said I.

"The daughter of a captain of a neighbouring mine," said he, "she frequently comes here with messages, and is always ready to do a turn about the house, for she is very handy."

"Has she any English?" said I.

"Not a word," he replied. "The young people of these hills have no English, except they go abroad to learn it."

"What hills are these?" said I.

"Part of the Plynlimmon range," said he.

"Dear me!" said I, "am I near Plynlimmon?"

"Not very far from it," said the young man, "and you will be nearer when you reach Pont Erwyd."

"Are you a native of these parts?" said I.

"I am not," he replied; "I am a native of Aberystwyth, a place on the sea-coast about a dozen miles from here."

"This seems to be a cold bleak spot," said I; "is it healthy?"

"I have reason to say so," said he; "for I came here from Aberystwyth about four months ago very unwell and am now perfectly recovered. I do not believe there is a healthier spot in all Wales."

We had some further discourse. I mentioned to him the adventure which I had on the hill with the fellow with the donkey. The young man said that he had no doubt that he was some prowling thief.

"The dogs of the shepherd's house," said I, "didn't seem to like him, and dogs generally know an evil customer. A long time ago I chanced to be in a posada or inn at Valladolid in Spain. One hot summer's afternoon I was seated in a corridor which ran round a large open court in the middle of the inn; a fine yellow, three-parts-grown bloodhound was lying on the ground beside me with whom I had been playing, a little time before. I was just about to fall asleep, when I heard a 'hem' at the outward door of the posada, which was a long way below at the end of a passage which communicated with the court. Instantly the hound started upon his legs and with a loud yell, and with eyes flashing fire, ran nearly round the corridor, down a flight of steps and through the passage to the gate. There was then a dreadful noise, in which the cries of a human being and the yells of the hound were blended. I forthwith started up and ran down, followed by several other guests who came rushing out of their chambers round the corridor. At the gate we saw a man on the ground and the hound

trying to strangle him. It was with the greatest difficulty and chiefly through the intervention of the master of the dog, who happened to be present, that the animal could be made to quit his hold. The assailed person was a very powerful man, but had an evil countenance, was badly dressed, and had neither hat, shoes nor stockings. We raised him up and gave him wine, which he drank greedily, and presently without saying a word disappeared. The guests said they had no doubt that he was a murderer flying from justice, and that the dog by his instinct, even at a distance, knew him to be such. The master said that it was the first time the dog had ever attacked anyone or shown the slightest symptom of ferocity. Not the least singular part of the matter was, that the dog did not belong to the house, but to one of the guests from a distant village; the creature therefore could not consider itself the house's guardian."

I had scarcely finished my tale when the other man came in and said that he had found a guide, a young man from Pont Erwyd, who would be glad of such an opportunity to go and

see his parents; that he was then dressing himself and would shortly make his appearance. In about twenty minutes he did so. He was a stout young fellow with a coarse blue coat, and coarse white felt hat; he held a stick in his hand. The kind young book-keeper now advised us to set out without delay as the day was drawing to a close, and the way was long. I shook him by the hand, told him that I should never forget his civility, and departed with the guide.

The fine young girl, whom I have already mentioned, and another about two years younger, departed with us. They were dressed in the graceful female attire of old Wales.

We bore to the south down a descent and came to some moory quaggy ground intersected with water-courses. The agility of the young girls surprised me: they sprang over the water-courses, some of which were at least four feet wide, with the ease and alacrity of fawns. After a short time we came to a road, which, however, we did not long reap the benefit of as it only led to a mine. Seeing a house on the top of a hill, I asked my guide whose it was.

"Ty powdr," said he, "a powder house," by which I supposed he meant a magazine of powder used for blasting in the mines. He had not a word of English.

If the young girls were nimble with their feet they were not less so with their tongues, as they kept up an incessant gabble with each other and with the guide. I understood little of what they said, their volubility preventing me from catching more than a few words. After we had gone about two miles and a half they darted away with surprising swiftness down a hill towards a distant house, where as I learned from my guide the father of the eldest lived. We ascended a hill, passed between two craggy elevations, and then wended to the south-east over a strange miry place in which I thought anyone at night not acquainted with every inch of the way would run imminent risk of perishing. I entered into conversation with my guide. After a little time he asked me if I was a Welshman. I told him no.

"You could teach many a Welshman," said he.

"Why do you think so?" said I.

"Because many of your words are quite above my comprehension," said he.

"No great compliment," thought I to myself, but putting a good face upon the matter I told him that I knew a great many old Welsh words.

"Is Potosi an old Welsh word?" said he.

"No," said I, "it is the name of a mine in the Deheubarth of America."

"Is it a lead mine?"

"No!" said I; "it is a silver mine."

"Then why do they call our mine, which is a lead mine, by the name of a silver mine?"

"Because they wish to give people to understand," said I, "that it is very rich, as rich in lead as Potosi in silver. Potosi is or was the richest silver mine in the world, and from it has come at least one-half of the silver which we use in the shape of money and other things."

"Well," said he, "I have frequently asked, but could never learn before why our mine was called Potosi."

"You did not ask at the right quarter," said I; "the young man with the glazed hat could have told you as well as I." I inquired why

the place where the mine was bore the name of Esgyrn Hirion or Long Bones. He told me that he did not know, but believed that the bones of a cawr or giant had been found there in ancient times. I asked him if the mine was deep.

"Very deep," he replied.

"Do you like the life of a miner?" said I.

"Very much," said he, "and should like it more, but for the noises of the hill."

"Do you mean the powder blasts?" said I.

"O no!" said he; "I care nothing for them, I mean the noises made by the spirits of the hill in the mine. Sometimes they make such noises as frighten the poor fellow who works underground out of his senses. Once on a time I was working by myself very deep underground, in a little chamber to which a very deep shaft led. I had just taken up my light to survey my work, when all of a sudden I heard a dreadful rushing noise, as if an immense quantity of earth had come tumbling down. 'O God!' said I, and fell backwards, letting the light fall, which instantly went out. I thought the whole

shaft had given way and that I was buried alive. I lay for several hours half stupified, thinking now and then what a dreadful thing it was to be buried alive. At length I thought I would get up, go to the mouth of the shaft, feel the mould, with which it was choked up, and then come back, lie down and die. So I got up and tottered to the mouth of the shaft, put out my hand and felt—nothing. All was clear. I went forward and presently felt the ladder. Nothing had fallen; all was just the same as when I came down. I was dreadfully afraid that I should never be able to get up in the dark without breaking my neck; however, I tried, and at last with a great deal of toil and danger got to a place where other men were working. The noise was caused by the spirits of the hill in the hope of driving the miner out of his senses. They very nearly succeeded. I shall never forget how I felt when I thought I was buried alive. If it were not for those noises in the hill the life of a miner would be quite heaven below."

We came to a cottage standing under

a hillock, down the side of which tumbled a streamlet close by the northern side of the building. The door was open, and inside were two or three females and some children. "Have you any enwyn?" said the lad, peeping in.

"O yes!" said a voice—"digon! digon!" presently a buxom laughing girl brought out two dishes of buttermilk, one of which she handed to me and the other to the guide. I asked her the name of the place.

"Gwen Frwd: the Fair Rivulet," said she.

"Who lives here?"

"A shepherd."

"Have you any English?"

"Nagos!" said she, bursting into a loud laugh. "What should we do with English here?" After we had drunk the buttermilk I offered the girl some money, but she drew back her hand angrily and said: "We don't take money from tired strangers for two drops of buttermilk; there's plenty within, and there are a thousand ewes on the hill. Farvel!"

"Dear me!" thought I to myself as I walked away, "that I should once in my days have found

shepherd life something as poets have represented it!"

I saw a mighty mountain at a considerable distance on the right, the same I believe which I had noted some hours before. I inquired of my guide whether it was Plynlimmon.

"O no!" said he, "that is Gaverse; Pumlimmon is to the left."

"Plynlimmon is a famed hill," said I; "I suppose it is very high."

"Yes!" said he, "it is high, but it is not famed because it is high, but because the three grand rivers of the world issue from its breast, the Hafren, the Rheidol, and the Gwy."

Night was now coming rapidly on, attended with a drizzling rain. I inquired if we were far from Pont Erwyd. "About a mile," said my guide, "we shall soon be there." We quickened our pace. After a little time he asked me if I was going farther than Pont Erwyd.

"I am bound for the bridge of the evil man," said I; "but I daresay I shall stop at Pont Erwyd to-night."

"You will do right," said he; "it is only three miles from Pont Erwyd to the bridge of the evil man, but I think we shall have a stormy night."

"When I get to Pont Erwyd," said I, "how far shall I be from South Wales?"

"From South Wales!" said he; "you are in South Wales now; you passed the Terfyn of North Wales a quarter of an hour ago."

The rain now fell fast, and there was so thick a mist that I could only see a few yards before me. We descended into a valley at the bottom of which I heard a river roaring.

"That's the Rheidol," said my guide, "coming from Pumlimmon, swollen with rain."

Without descending to the river we turned aside up a hill, and after passing by a few huts came to a large house, which my guide told me was the inn of Pont Erwyd.

CHAPTER XIV.

CONSEQUENTIAL LANDLORD.—CHEEK.—DARFEL GATHEREL.—DAFYDD NANMOR.—SHEEP FARMS.—WHOLESOME ADVICE.—THE OLD POSTMAN.—THE PLANT DE BAT.—THE ROBBER'S CAVERN.

My guide went to a side door and opening it without ceremony went in. I followed and found myself in a spacious and comfortable-looking kitchen: a large fire blazed in a huge grate, on one side of which was a settle; plenty of culinary utensils, both pewter and copper, hung around on the walls, and several goodly rows of hams and sides of bacon were suspended from the roof. There were several people present, some on the settle and others on chairs in the vicinity of the fire. As I advanced a man arose from a chair and came towards me. He was about thirty-five years of age, well and

strongly made, with a fresh complexion, a hawk nose and a keen grey eye. He wore top boots and breeches, a half jockey coat, and had a round cap made of the skin of some animal on his head.

"Servant, sir!" said he in rather a sharp tone, and surveying me with something of a supercilious air.

"Your most obedient humble servant!" said I; "I presume you are the landlord of this house."

"Landlord!" said he, "landlord! It is true I receive guests sometimes into my house, but I do so solely with the view of accommodating them; I do not depend upon innkeeping for a livelihood. I hire the principal part of the land in this neighbourhood."

"If that be the case," said I, "I had better continue my way to the Devil's Bridge; I am not at all tired, and I believe it is not very far distant."

"O, as you are here," said the farmer-landlord, "I hope you will stay. I should be very sorry if any gentleman should leave my house at

night after coming with an intention of staying, more especially in a night like this. Martha!" said he turning to a female between thirty and forty, who I subsequently learned was the mistress —"prepare the parlour instantly for this gentleman, and don't fail to make up a good fire."

Martha forthwith hurried away, attended by a much younger female.

"Till your room is prepared, sir," said he, "perhaps you will have no objection to sit down before our fire?"

"Not the least," said I; "nothing gives me greater pleasure than to sit before a kitchen fire. First of all, however, I must settle with my guide and likewise see that he has something to eat and drink."

"Shall I interpret for you?" said the landlord; "the lad has not a word of English; I know him well."

"I have not been under his guidance for the last three hours," said I, "without knowing that he cannot speak English; but I want no interpreter."

"You do not mean to say, sir," said the

landlord, with a surprised and dissatisfied air, "that you understand Welsh?"

I made no answer, but turning to the guide thanked him for his kindness, and giving him some money asked him if it was enough.

"More than enough, sir," said the lad; "I did not expect half as much. Farewell!"

He was then about to depart, but I prevented him saying:

"You must not go till you have eaten and drunk. What will you have?"

"Merely a cup of ale, sir," said the lad.

"That won't do," said I; "you shall have bread and cheese and as much ale as you can drink. Pray," said I to the landlord, "let this young man have some bread and cheese and a large quart of ale."

The landlord looked at me for a moment, then turning to the lad he said:

"What do you think of that, Shon? It is some time since you had a quart of ale to your own cheek."

"Cheek," said I, "cheek! Is that a Welsh

word? Surely it is an importation from the English, and not a very genteel one."

"O come, sir!" said the landlord, "we can dispense with your criticisms. A pretty thing indeed for you, on the strength of knowing half-a-dozen words of Welsh, to set up for a Welsh critic in the house of a person who knows the ancient British language perfectly."

"Dear me!" said I, "how fortunate I am! a person thoroughly versed in the ancient British language is what I have long wished to see. Pray what is the meaning of Darfel Gatherel?"

"O sir!" said the landlord, "you must answer that question yourself; I don't pretend to understand gibberish!"

"Darfel Gatherel," said I, "is not gibberish; it was the name of the great wooden image at Ty Dewi, or Saint David's, in Pembrokeshire, to which thousands of pilgrims in the days of popery used to repair for the purpose of adoring it, and which at the time of the Reformation was sent up to London as a curiosity, where it eventually served as firewood to burn the monk

Forrest upon, who was sentenced to the stake by Henry the Eighth for denying his supremacy. What I want to know is, the meaning of the name, which I could never get explained, but which you who know the ancient British language perfectly can doubtless interpret."

"O sir," said the landlord, "when I said I knew the British language perfectly, I perhaps went too far; there are of course some obsolete terms in the British tongue, which I don't understand. Dar, Dar—what is it? Darmod Cotterel amongst the rest, but to a general knowledge of the Welsh language I think I may lay some pretensions; were I not well acquainted with it I should not have carried off the prize at various eisteddfodau, as I have done. I am a poet, sir, a prydydd."

"It is singular enough," said I, "that the only two Welsh poets I have seen have been innkeepers—one is yourself, the other a person I met in Anglesey. I suppose the Muse is fond of cwrw da."

"You would fain be pleasant, sir," said the landlord; "but I beg leave to inform you that

I am not fond of pleasantries; and now as my wife and the servant are returned I will have the pleasure of conducting you to the parlour."

"Before I go," said I, "I should like to see my guide provided with what I ordered." I stayed till the lad was accommodated with bread and cheese and a foaming tankard of ale, and then bidding him farewell I followed the landlord into the parlour where I found a fire kindled, which, however, smoked exceedingly. I asked my host what I could have for supper and was told that he did not know, but that if I would leave the matter to him he would send the best he could. As he was going away, I said: "So you are a poet. Well, I am very glad to hear it, for I have been fond of Welsh poetry from my boyhood. What kind of verse do you employ in general? Did you ever write an awdl in the four-and-twenty measures? What are the themes of your songs? The deeds of the ancient heroes of South Wales, I suppose, and the hospitality of the great men of the neighbourhood who receive you as an honoured guest at their tables. I'll bet a guinea

that however clever a fellow you may be you never sang anything in praise of your landlord's housekeeping equal to what Dafydd Nanmor sang in praise of that of Ryce of Twyn four hundred years ago:

'For Ryce if hundred thousands plough'd
The lands around his fair abode;
Did vines of thousand vineyards bleed,
Still corn and wine great Ryce would need;
If all the earth had bread's sweet savour,
And water all had cyder's flavour,
Three roaring feasts in Ryce's hall
Would swallow earth and ocean all.'

Hey?"

"Really, sir," said the landlord, "I don't know how to reply to you, for the greater part of your discourse is utterly unintelligible to me. Perhaps you are a better Welshman than myself; but however that may be, I shall take the liberty of retiring in order to give orders about your supper."

In about half-an-hour the supper made its appearance in the shape of some bacon and eggs: on tasting them I found them very good, and calling for some ale I made a very tolerable supper. After the things had been removed I drew near to the fire, but as it still

smoked, I soon betook myself to the kitchen. My guide had taken his departure, but the others whom I had left were still there. The landlord was talking in Welsh to a man in a rough great-coat about sheep. Setting myself down near the fire I called for a glass of whisky-and-water, and then observing that the landlord and his friend had suddenly become silent I said: "Pray go on with your discourse! Don't let me be any hindrance to you."

"Yes, sir!" said the landlord snappishly, "go on with our discourse; for your edification, I suppose?"

"Well," said I, "suppose it is for my edification, surely you don't grudge a stranger a little edification which will cost you nothing?"

"I don't know that, sir," said the landlord; "I don't know that. Really, sir, the kitchen is not the place for a gentleman."

"Yes, it is," said I, "provided the parlour smokes. Come, come, I am going to have a glass of whisky-and-water; perhaps you will take one with me."

"Well, sir!" said the landlord in rather a

softened tone, "I have no objection to take a glass with you."

Two glasses of whisky-and-water were presently brought, and the landlord and I drank to each other's health.

"Is this a sheep district?" said I, after a pause of a minute or two.

"Yes, sir!" said the landlord; "it may to a certain extent be called a sheep district."

"I suppose the Southdown and Norfolk breeds would not do for these here parts," said I with a regular Norfolk whine.

"No, sir! I don't think they would exactly," said the landlord, staring at me. "Do you know anything about sheep?"

"Plenty plenty," said I; "quite as much indeed as about Welsh words and poetry." Then in a yet more whining tone than before I said: "Do you think that a body with money in his pocket could hire a nice comfortable sheep farm hereabouts?"

"O sir!" said the landlord in a furious tone, "you have come to look out for a farm I see, and to outbid us poor Welshmen: it is on that

account you have studied Welsh; but, sir, I would have you know——"

"Come!" said I, "don't be afraid; I wouldn't have all the farms in your country, provided you would tie them in a string and offer them to me. If I talked about a farm it was because I am in the habit of talking about everything, being versed in all matters, do you see, or affecting to be so, which comes much to the same thing. My real business in this neighbourhood is to see the Devil's Bridge and the scenery about it."

"Very good, sir!" said the landlord; "I thought so at first. A great many English go to see the Devil's Bridge and the scenery near it, though I really don't know why, for there is nothing so very particular in either. We have a bridge here too quite as good as the Devil's Bridge; and as for scenery, I'll back the scenery about this house against anything of the kind in the neighbourhood of the Devil's Bridge. Yet everybody goes to the Devil's Bridge and nobody comes here."

"You might easily bring everybody here,"

said I, "if you would but employ your talent. You should celebrate the wonders of your neighbourhood in cowydds, and you would soon have plenty of visitors; but you don't want them, you know, and prefer to be without them."

The landlord looked at me for a moment, then taking a sip of his whisky-and-water he turned to the man with whom he had previously been talking and recommenced the discourse about sheep. I make no doubt, however, that I was a restraint upon them; they frequently glanced at me, and soon fell to whispering. At last both got up and left the room; the landlord finishing his glass of whisky-and-water before he went away.

"So you are going to the Devil's Bridge, sir!" said an elderly man, dressed in a grey coat with a broad brimmed hat, who sat on the settle smoking a pipe in company with another elderly man with a leather hat, with whom I had heard him discourse sometimes in Welsh, sometimes in English, the Welsh which he spoke being rather broken.

"Yes!" said I, "I am going to have a sight of the bridge and the neighbouring scenery."

"Well, sir, I don't think you will be disappointed, for both are wonderful."

"Are you a Welshman?" said I.

"No, sir! I am not; I am an Englishman from Durham, which is the best county in England."

"So it is," said I; "for some things, at any rate. For example, where do you find such beef as in Durham?"

"Ah, where indeed, sir? I have always said that neither the Devonshire nor the Lincolnshire beef is to be named in the same day with that of Durham."

"Well," said I, "what business do you follow in these parts? I suppose you farm?"

"No, sir! I do not; I am what they call a mining captain."

"I suppose that gentleman," said I motioning to the man in the leather hat, "is not from Durham?"

"No, sir, he is not, he is from this neighbourhood."

"And does he follow mining?"

"No sir, he does not; he carries about the letters."

"Is your mine near this place?" said I.

"Not very, sir; it is nearer the Devil's Bridge."

"Why is the bridge called the Devil's Bridge?" said I.

"Because, sir, 'tis said that the Devil built it in the old time, though that I can hardly believe, for the Devil, do ye see, delights in nothing but mischief, and it is not likely that such being the case he would have built a thing which must have been of wonderful service to people by enabling them to pass in safety over a dreadful gulf."

"I have heard," said the old postman with the leather hat, "that the Devil had no hand in de work at all, but that it was built by a Mynach or monk, on which account de river over which de bridge is built is called Afon y Mynach—dat is de Monk's River."

"Did you ever hear," said I, "of three crea-

tures who lived a long time ago near the Devil's Bridge called the Plant de Bat?"

"Ah, master!" said the old postman, "I do see that you have been in these parts before; had you not you would not know of the Plant de Bat."

"No," said I, "I have never been here before; but I heard of them when I was a boy from a Cumro who taught me Welsh, and had lived for some time in these parts. Well, what do they say here about the Plant de Bat? for he who mentioned them to me could give me no further information about them than that they were horrid creatures who lived in a cave near the Devil's Bridge several hundred years ago."

"Well, master," said the old postman, thrusting his forefinger twice or thrice into the bowl of his pipe, "I will tell you what they says here about the Plant de Bat. In de old time two, three hundred year ago, a man lived somewhere about here called Bat or Bartholomew; this man had three children, two boys and one girl, who, because their father's name

was Bat, were generally called Plant de Bat or Bat's children. Very wicked children they were from their cradle, giving their father and mother much trouble and uneasiness; no good in any one of them, neither in the boys nor the girl. Now the boys, once when they were rambling idly about, lighted by chance upon a cave near the Devil's Bridge. Very strange cave it was, with just one little hole at top to go in by. So the boys said to one another: 'Nice cave this for thief to live in. Suppose we come here when we are a little more big and turn thief ourselves.' Well, they waited till they were a little more big, and then leaving their father's house they came to de cave and turned thief, lying snug there all day and going out at night to rob upon the roads. Well, there was soon much talk in the country about the robberies which were being committed, and people often went out in search of de thieves, but all in vain; and no wonder, for they were in a cave very hard to light upon, having as I said before merely one little hole at top to go in by. So Bat's boys

went on swimmingly for a long time, lying snug in cave by day and going out at night to rob, letting no one know where they were but their sister, who was as bad as themselves, and used to come to them and bring them food and stay with them for weeks and sometimes go out and rob with them. But as de pitcher which goes often to de well comes home broke at last so it happened with Bat's children. After robbing people upon the roads by night many a long year and never being found out, they at last met one great gentleman upon the roads by night and not only robbed but killed him, leaving his body all cut and gashed near to Devil's Bridge. That job was the ruin of Plant de Bat, for the great gentleman's friends gathered together and hunted after his murderers with dogs, and at length came to the cave, and going in found it stocked with riches, and the Plant de Bat sitting upon the riches, not only the boys but the girl also. So they took out the riches and the Plant de Bat, and the riches they did give to churches and spyttys, and the Plant de Bat they did execute, hanging the boys and

burning the girl. That, master, is what they says in dese parts about the Plant de Bat."

"Thank you!" said I. "Is the cave yet to be seen?"

"O yes! it is yet to be seen, or part of it, for it is not now what it was, having been partly flung open to hinder other thieves from nestling in it. It is on the bank of the river Mynach just before it joins the Rheidol. Many gentlefolk in de summer go to see the Plant de Bat's cave."

"Are you sure," said I, "that Plant de Bat means Bat's children?"

"I am not sure, master; I merely says what I have heard other people say. I believe some says that it means the wicked children or the Devil's children. And now master we may as well have done with them, for should you question me through the whole night I could tell you nothing more about the Plant de Bat."

After a little farther discourse, chiefly about sheep and the weather, I retired to the parlour, where the fire was now burning brightly; seating myself before it, I remained for a considerable

time staring at the embers and thinking over the events of the day. At length I rang the bell and begged to be shown to my chamber where I soon sank to sleep, lulled by the pattering of rain against the window and the sound of a neighbouring cascade.

CHAPTER XV.

WILD SCENERY.—AWFUL CHASM.—JOHN GREAVES.—DURHAM COUNTY.—QUEEN PHILIPPA.—THE TWO ALDENS.—WELSH WIFE.—THE NOBLEST BUSINESS.—THE WELSH AND THE SALVE.—THE LAD JOHN.

A RAINY and boisterous night was succeeded by a bright and beautiful morning. I arose and having ordered breakfast went forth to see what kind of country I had got into. I found myself amongst wild, strange-looking hills, not, however, of any particular height. The house, which seemed to front the east, stood on the side of a hill on a wide platform abutting on a deep and awful chasm, at the bottom of which chafed and foamed the Rheidol. This river enters the valley of Pont Erwyd from the north-west, then makes a variety of snake-like turns, and at last bears away to the south-east just below the inn. The banks are sheer walls

from sixty to a hundred feet high, and the bed of the river has all the appearance of a volcanic rent. A brook running from the south past the inn, tumbles into the chasm at an angle, and forms the cascade whose sound had lulled me to sleep the preceding night.

After breakfasting I paid my bill, and set out for the Devil's Bridge without seeing anything more of that remarkable personage in whom were united landlord, farmer, poet, and mighty fine gentleman—the master of the house. I soon reached the bottom of the valley where are a few houses and the bridge from which the place takes its name, Pont Erwyd signifying the Bridge of Erwyd. As I was looking over the bridge near which are two or three small waterfalls, an elderly man in a grey coat, followed by a young lad and dog, came down the road which I had myself just descended.

"Good day, sir," said he stopping, when he came upon the bridge. "I suppose you are bound my road?"

"Ah," said I, recognizing the old mining captain with whom I had talked in the kitchen the

night before, "is it you? I am glad to see you. Yes! I am bound your way, provided you are going to the Devil's Bridge."

"Then, sir, we can go together, for I am bound to my mine, which lies only a little way t'other side of the Devil's Bridge."

Crossing the bridge of Erwyd we directed our course to the south-east.

"What young man is that," said I, "who is following behind us?"

"The young man, sir, is my son John, and the dog with him is his dog Joe."

"And what may your name be, if I may take the liberty of asking?"

"Greaves, sir; John Greaves from the county of Durham."

"Ah! a capital county that," said I.

"You like the county, sir! God bless you! John!" said he in a loud voice, turning to the lad, "why don't you offer to carry the gentleman's knapsack?"

"Don't let him trouble himself," said I. "As I was just now saying, a capital county is Durham county."

"You really had better let the boy carry your bag, sir."

"No!" said I; "I would rather carry it myself. I question upon the whole whether there is a better county in England."

"Is it long since your honour was in Durham county?"

"A good long time. A matter of forty years."

"Forty years! why that's the life of a man. That's longer than I have been out of the county myself. I suppose your honour can't remember much about the county."

"O yes I can, I remember a good deal."

"Please your honour tell me what you remember about the county. It would do me good to hear it."

"Well, I remember it was a very fine county in more respects than one. One part of it was full of big hills and mountains, where there were mines of coal and lead with mighty works with tall chimneys spouting out black smoke, and engines roaring and big wheels going round, some turned by steam, and others by what they

called forces, that is brooks of water dashing down steep channels. Another part was a more level country with beautiful woods, happy-looking farmhouses, well-filled fields and rich glorious meadows, in which stood stately with brown sides and short horns the Durham ox.

"O dear, O dear!" said my companion. "Ah, I see your honour knows everything about Durham county. Forces! none but one who had been in Durham county would have used that word. I haven't heard it for five-and-thirty years. Forces! there was a force close to my village. I wonder if your honour has ever been in Durham city."

"O yes! I have been there."

"Does your honour remember anything about Durham city?"

"O yes! I remember a good deal about it."

"Then your honour pray tell us what you remember about it—pray do! perhaps it will do me good."

"Well then, I remember that it was a fine old city standing on a hill with a river running under it, and that it had a fine old church, one

of the finest in the whole of Britain; likewise a fine old castle; and last, not least, a capital old inn, where I got a capital dinner off roast Durham beef, and a capital glass of ale, which I believe was the cause of my being ever after fond of ale."

"Dear me! Ah, I see your honour knows all about Durham city. And now let me ask one question. How came your honour to Durham city and county? I don't think your honour is a Durham man either of town or field."

"I am not; but when I was a little boy I passed through Durham county with my mother and brother to a place called Scotland."

"Scotland! a queer country that, your honor!"

"So it is," said I; "a queerer country I never saw in all my life."

"And a queer set of people, your honour."

"So they are," said I; "a queerer set of people than the Scotch you would scarcely see in a summer's day."

"The Durham folks, neither of town or field,

have much reason to speak well of the Scotch, your honour."

"I dare say not," said I; "very few people have."

"And yet the Durham folks, your honour, generally contrived to give them as good as they brought."

"That they did," said I; "a pretty licking the Durham folks once gave the Scots under the walls of Durham city, after the scamps had been plundering the country for three weeks—a precious licking they gave them, slaying I don't know how many thousands and taking their king prisoner."

"So they did, your honour, and under the command of a woman too."

"Very true," said I; "Queen Philippa."

"Just so, your honour! the idea that your honour should know so much about Durham, both field and town!"

"Well," said I, "since I have told you so much about Durham, perhaps you will now tell me something about yourself. How did you come here?"

"I had better begin from the beginning, your honour. I was born in Durham county close beside the Great Force, which no doubt your honour has seen. My father was a farmer and had a bit of a share in a mining concern. I was brought up from my childhood both to farming and mining work, but most to mining, because, do you see, I took most pleasure in it, being the more noble business of the two. Shortly after I had come to man's estate my father died leaving me a decent little property, whereupon I forsook farming altogether and gave myself up, body soul and capital, to mining, which at last I thoroughly understood in all its branches. Well, your honour; about five-and-thirty years ago, that was when I was about twenty-eight, a cry went through the north country that a great deal of money might be made by opening Wales, that is, by mining in Wales in the proper fashion, which means the north country fashion, for there is no other fashion of mining good for much—there had long been mines in Wales, but they had always been worked in a poor weak languid manner, very

different from that of the north country. So a company was formed, at the head of which were the Aldens, George and Thomas, for opening Wales, and they purchased certain mines in these districts, which they knew to be productive, and which might be made yet more so, and settling down here called themselves the Rheidol United. Well, after they had been here a little time they found themselves in want of a man to superintend their concerns, above all in the smelting department. So they thought of me, who was known to most of the mining gentry in the north country, and they made a proposal to me through George Alden, afterwards Sir George, to come here and superintend. I said no, at first, for I didn't like the idea of leaving Durham county to come to such an outlandish place as Wales; howsomeover, I at last allowed myself to be overpersuaded by George Alden, afterwards Sir George, and here I came with my wife and family, for I must tell your honour I had married a respectable young woman of Durham county, by whom I had two little ones—here I came and did my best for the service of the

Rheidol United. The company was terribly set to it for a long time, spending a mint of money and getting very poor returns. To my certain knowledge the two Aldens, George and Tom, spent between them thirty thousand pounds — the company, however, persevered, chiefly at the instigation of the Aldens, who were in the habit of saying 'Never say die!' and at last got the better of all their difficulties and rolled in riches, and had the credit of being the first company that ever opened Wales, which they richly deserved, for I will uphold it that the Rheidol United, particularly the Aldens, George and Thomas, were the first people who really opened Wales. In their service I have been for five-and-thirty years, and daresay shall continue so till I die. I have been tolerably comfortable, your honour, though I have had my griefs, the bitterest of which was the death of my wife, which happened about eight years after I came to this country. I thought I should have gone wild at first, your honour! having, however, always plenty to do, I at last got the better of my affliction. I continued single till my English

family grew up and left me, when feeling myself rather lonely I married a decent young Welshwoman, by whom I had one son, the lad John, who is following behind with his dog Joe. And now your honour knows the whole story of John Greaves, miner, from the county of Durham."

"And a most entertaining and instructive history it is," said I. "You have not told me, however, how you contrived to pick up Welsh: I heard you speaking it last night with the postman."

"Why, through my Welsh wife, your honour! Without her I don't think I should ever have picked up the Welsh manner of discoursing—she is a good kind of woman, my Welsh wife, though——"

"The loss of your Durham wife must have been a great grief to you," said I.

"It was the bitterest grief, your honour, as I said before, that I ever had—my next worst I think was the death of a dear friend."

"Who was that?" said I.

"Who was it, your honour? why, the Duke of Newcastle."

"Dear me!" said I; "how came you to know him?"

"Why, your honour, he lived at a place not far from here, called Hafod, and so——"

"Hafod!" said I; "I have often heard of Hafod and its library; but I thought it belonged to an old Welsh family called Johnes."

"Well, so it did, your honour! but the family died away, and the estate was put up for sale, and purchased by the Duke, who built a fine house upon it, which he made his chief place of residence—the old family house, I must tell your honour, in which the library was, had been destroyed by fire: well, he hadn't been long settled there before he found me out and took wonderfully to me, discoursing with me and consulting me about his farming and improvements. Many is the pleasant chat and discourse I have had with his Grace for hours and hours together, for his Grace had not a bit of pride, at least he never showed any to me, though,

perhaps the reason of that was that we were both north-country people. Lord! I would have laid down my life for his Grace and have done anything but one which he once asked me to do: 'Greaves,' said the Duke to me one day, 'I wish you would give up mining and become my steward.' 'Sorry I can't oblige your Grace,' said I; 'but give up mining I cannot. I will at any time give your Grace all the advice I can about farming and such like, but give up mining I cannot: because why? I conceive mining to be the noblest business in the 'versal world.' Whereupon his Grace laughed, and said he dare say I was right, and never mentioned the subject again."

"Was his Grace very fond of farming and improving?"

"O yes, your honour! like all the great gentry, especially the north-country gentry, his Grace was wonderfully fond of farming and improving—and a wonderful deal of good he did, reclaiming thousands of acres of land which was before good for nothing, and building capital farm-houses and offices for his tenants. His

grand feat, however, was bringing the Durham bull into this country which formed a capital cross with the Welsh cows. Pity that he wasn't equally fortunate with the north-country sheep."

"Did he try to introduce them into Wales?"

"Yes; but they didn't answer, as I knew they wouldn't. Says I to the Duke: 'It won't do, your Grace, to bring the north-country sheep here: because why? the hills are too wet and cold for their constitutions;' but his Grace, who had sometimes a will of his own, persisted and brought the north-country sheep to these parts, and it turned out as I said: the sheep caught the disease and the wool parted and——"

"But," said I, "you should have told him about the salve made of bran, butter and oil; you should have done that."

"Well, so I did, your honour; I told him about the salve, and the Duke listened to me and the salve was made by these very hands; but when it was made, what do you think? the foolish Welsh wouldn't put it on, saying that it was against their laws and statties and religion

to use it, and talked about Devil's salves and the Witch of Endor, and the sin against the Holy Ghost, and such like nonsense. So to prevent a regular rebellion, the Duke gave up the salve and the poor sheep pined away and died, till at last there was not one left."

"Who holds the estate at present?" said I.

"Why, a great gentleman from Lancashire, your honour, who bought it when the Duke died; but he doesn't take the same pleasure in it which the Duke did, nor spend so much money about it, the consequence being that everything looks very different from what it looked in the Duke's time. The inn at the Devil's Bridge and the grounds look very different from what they looked in the Duke's time, for you must know that the inn and the grounds form part of the Hafod estate, and are hired from the proprietor."

By this time we had arrived at a small village, with a toll-bar and a small church or chapel at some little distance from the road, which here made a turn nearly full south. The road was very good but the country was wild and rugged; there was a deep vale on the right, at the bottom

of which rolled the Rheidol in its cleft, rising beyond which were steep, naked hills.

"This village," said my companion, "is called Ysbytty Cynfyn. Down on the right, past the church, is a strange bridge across the Rheidol, which runs there through a horrid kind of a place. The bridge is called Pont yr Offeiriad or the Parson's Bridge, because in the old time the clergyman passed over it every Sunday to do duty in the church here."

"Why is this place called Ysbytty Cynfyn?" said I, "which means the hospital of the first boundary; is there a hospital of the second boundary near here?"

"I can't say anything about boundaries, your honour; all I know is, that there is another Spytty farther on beyond Hafod called Ysbytty Ystwyth, or the 'Spytty upon the Ystwyth. But to return to the matter of the Minister's Bridge: I would counsel your honour to go and see that bridge before you leave these parts. A vast number of gentry go to see it in the summer time. It was the bridge which the landlord was mentioning last night, though it scarcely

belongs to his district, being quite as near the Devil's Bridge inn, as it is to his own, your honour."

We went on discoursing for about half a mile farther, when, stopping by a road which branched off to the hills on the left, my companion said: "I must now wish your honour good day, being obliged to go a little way up here to a mining work on a small bit of business; my son, however, and his dog Joe will show your honour the way to the Devil's Bridge, as they are bound to a place a little way past it. I have now but one word to say, which is, that should ever your honour please to visit me at my mine, your honour shall receive every facility for inspecting the works, and moreover have a belly-full of drink and victuals from Jock Greaves, miner from the county of Durham."

I shook the honest fellow by the hand and went on in company with the lad John and his dog as far as the Devil's Bridge. John was a highly-intelligent lad, spoke Welsh and English fluently, could read, as he told me, both languages, and had some acquaintance with the

writings of Twm o'r Nant, as he showed by repeating the following lines of the carter poet, certainly not the worst which he ever wrote:

"Twm o'r Nant mae cant a'm galw
Tomas Edwards yw fy enw.

Tom O Nant is a nickname I've got,
My name's Thomas Edwards, I wot."

CHAPTER XVI.

THE HOSPICE.—THE TWO RIVERS.—THE DEVIL'S BRIDGE.—PLEASANT RECOLLECTIONS.

I ARRIVED at the Devil's Bridge at about eleven o'clock of a fine but cold day, and took up my quarters at the inn, of which I was the sole guest during the whole time that I continued there, for the inn, standing in a lone, wild district, has very few guests except in summer, when it is thronged with tourists, who avail themselves of that genial season to view the wonders of Wales, of which the region close by is considered amongst the principal.

The inn, or rather hospice, for the sounding name of hospice is more applicable to it than the common one of inn, was built at a great expense by the late Duke of Newcastle. It is

an immense lofty cottage with projecting eaves, and has a fine window to the east which enlightens a stately staircase and a noble gallery. It fronts the north and stands in the midst of one of the most remarkable localities in the world, of which it would require a far more vigorous pen than mine to convey an adequate idea.

Far to the west is a tall, strange-looking hill, the top of which bears no slight resemblance to that of a battlemented castle. This hill, which is believed to have been in ancient times a stronghold of the Britons, bears the name of Bryn y Castell or the hill of the castle. To the north-west are russet hills, to the east two brown paps, whilst to the south is a high, swelling mountain. To the north and just below the hospice is a profound hollow with all the appearance of the crater of an extinct volcano; at the bottom of this hollow the waters of two rivers unite; those of the Rheidol from the north, and those of the Afon y Mynach, or the Monks' River, from the south-east. The Rheidol falling over a rocky precipice at the northern

side of the hollow forms a cataract very pleasant to look upon from the middle upper window of the inn. Those of the Mynach which pass under the celebrated Devil's Bridge are not visible, though they generally make themselves heard. The waters of both, after uniting, flow away through a romantic glen towards the west. The sides of the hollow and indeed of most of the ravines in the neighbourhood, which are numerous, are beautifully clad with wood.

Penetrate now into the hollow above which the hospice stands. You descend by successive flights of steps, some of which are very slippery and insecure. On your right is the Monks' River, roaring down its dingle in five successive falls, to join its brother the Rheidol. Each of the falls has its own peculiar basin, one or two of which are said to be of awful depth. The length which these falls with their basins occupy is about five hundred feet. On the side of the basin of the last but one, is the cave or the site of the cave, said to have been occupied in old times by the Wicked Children, the mysterious Plant de Bat, two brothers and a sister, robbers

and murderers. At present it is nearly open on every side, having, it is said, been destroyed to prevent its being the haunt of other evil people: there is a tradition in the country that the fall at one time tumbled over its mouth. This tradition, however, is evidently without foundation, as from the nature of the ground the river could never have run but in its present channel. Of all the falls the fifth or last is the most considerable: you view it from a kind of den, to which the last flight of steps, the ruggedest and most dangerous of all, has brought you; your position here is a wild one. The fall, which is split into two, is thundering beside you; foam, foam, foam is flying all about you: the basin or cauldron is boiling frightfully below you: hirsute rocks are frowning terribly above you, and above them forest trees, dank and wet with spray and mist, are distilling drops in showers from their boughs.

But where is the bridge, the celebrated bridge of the Evil Man? From the bottom of the first flight of steps leading down into the hollow you see a modern-looking bridge, be-

striding a deep chasm or cleft to the south-east, near the top of the dingle of the Monks' River, over it lies the road to Pont Erwyd. That, however, is not the Devil's Bridge—but about twenty feet below that bridge and completely overhung by it, don't you see a shadowy, spectral object, something like a bow, which likewise bestrides the chasm? You do! Well! that shadowy, spectral object is the celebrated Devil's Bridge, or, as the timorous peasants of the locality call it, the Pont y Gwr Drwg. It is now merely preserved as an object of curiosity, the bridge above being alone used for transit, and is quite inaccessible except to birds, and the climbing wicked boys of the neighbourhood, who sometimes at the risk of their lives contrive to get upon it from the frightfully steep northern bank, and snatch a fearful joy, as, whilst lying on their bellies, they poke their heads over its sides worn by age, without parapet to prevent them from falling into the horrid gulf below. But from the steps in the hollow the view of the Devil's Bridge, and likewise of the cleft, is very slight and unsatisfactory. To view it

properly, and the wonders connected with it, you must pass over the bridge above it, and descend a precipitous dingle on the eastern side till you come to a small platform in a crag. Below you now is a frightful cavity, at the bottom of which the waters of the Monks' River, which comes tumbling from a glen to the east, whirl, boil and hiss in a horrid pot or cauldron, called in the language of the country Twll yn y graig, or the hole in the rock, in a manner truly tremendous. On your right is a slit, probably caused by volcanic force, through which the waters after whirling in the cauldron eventually escape. The slit is wonderfully narrow considering its altitude which is very great, considerably upwards of a hundred feet—nearly above you, crossing the slit, which is partially wrapt in darkness, is the far-famed bridge, the Bridge of the Evil Man, a work which though crumbling and darkly grey does much honour to the hand which built it, whether it was the hand of Satan or of a monkish architect, for the arch is chaste and beautiful, far superior in every respect, except in safety and

utility, to the one above it, which from this place you have not the mortification of seeing. Gaze on these objects, namely the horrid seething pot or cauldron, the gloomy volcanic slit, and the spectral, shadowy Devil's Bridge for about three minutes, allowing a minute to each, then scramble up the bank and repair to your inn, and have no more sight-seeing that day, for you have seen enough. And if pleasant recollections do not haunt you through life of the noble falls and the beautiful wooded dingles to the west of the bridge of the Evil One, and awful and mysterious ones of the monks' boiling cauldron, the long, savage, shadowy cleft, and the grey, crumbling, spectral bridge, I say boldly that you must be a very unpoetical person indeed.

CHAPTER XVII.

DINNER AT THE HOSPICE.—EVENING GOSSIP.—A DAY OF RAIN.—A SCANTY FLOCK.—THE BRIDGE OF THE MINISTER.—LEGS IN DANGER.

I DINED in a parlour of the inn commanding an excellent view of the hollow and the Rheidol fall. Shortly after I had dined a fierce storm of rain and wind came on. It lasted for an hour and then everything again became calm. Just before evening was closing in I took a stroll to a village which stands a little way to the west of the inn. It consists only of a few ruinous edifices and is chiefly inhabited by miners and their families. I saw no men, but plenty of women and children. Seeing a knot of women and girls chatting I went up and addressed them —some of the girls were very good-looking—

none of the party had any English ; all of them were very civil. I first talked to them about religion, and found that without a single exception they were Calvinistic Methodists. I next talked to them about the Plant de Bat. They laughed heartily at the first mention of their name, but seemed to know very little about their history. After some twenty minutes' discourse I bade them good night and returned to my inn.

The night was very cold ; the people of the house, however, made up for me a roaring fire of turf, and I felt very comfortable. About ten o'clock I went to bed, intending next morning to go and see Plynlimmon, which I had left behind me on entering Cardiganshire. When the morning came, however, I saw at once that I had entered upon a day by no means adapted for excursions of any considerable length, for it rained terribly ; but this gave me very little concern ; my time was my own, and I said to myself : "If I can't go to-day I can perhaps go to-morrow." After breakfast I passed some hours in a manner by no means

disagreeable, sometimes meditating before my turf fire with my eyes fixed upon it, and sometimes sitting by the window with my eyes fixed upon the cascade of the Rheidol, which was every moment becoming more magnificent. At length about twelve o'clock, fearing that if I stayed within I should lose my appetite for dinner, which has always been one of the greatest of my enjoyments, I determined to go and see the Minister's Bridge which my friend the old mining captain had spoken to me about. I knew that I should get a wetting by doing so, for the weather still continued very bad, but I don't care much for a wetting provided I have a good roof, a good fire and good fare to betake myself to afterwards.

So I set out. As I passed over the bridge of the Mynach River I looked down over the eastern balustrade. The Bridge of the Evil One, which is just below it, was quite invisible. I could see, however, the pot or crochan distinctly enough, and a horrible sight it presented. The waters were whirling round in a manner to describe which any word but frenzied would

be utterly powerless. Half-an-hour's walking brought me to the little village through which I had passed the day before. Going up to a house I knocked at the door, and a middle-aged man opening it, I asked him the way to the Bridge of the Minister. He pointed to the little chapel to the west and said that the way lay past it, adding that he would go with me himself, as he wanted to go to the hills on the other side to see his sheep.

We got presently into discourse. He at first talked broken English, but soon began to speak his native language. I asked him if the chapel belonged to the Methodists.

"It is not a chapel," said he, "it is a church."

"Do many come to it?" said I.

"Not many, sir, for the Methodists are very powerful here. Not more than forty or fifty come."

"Do you belong to the Church?" said I.

"I do, sir! thank God!"

"You may well be thankful," said I, "for it is a great privilege to belong to the Church of England."

"It is so, sir!" said the man, "though few, alas! think so."

I found him a highly-intelligent person: on my talking to him about the name of the place he said that some called it Spytty Cynfyn, and others Spytty Cynwyl, and that both Cynwyl and Cynfyn were the names of people, to one or other of which the place was dedicated, and that like the place farther on called Spytty Ystwyth, it was in the old time a hospital or inn for the convenience of the pilgrims going to the great monastery of Ystrad Flur or Strata Florida.

Passing through a field or two we came to the side of a very deep ravine, down which there was a zigzag path leading to the bridge. The path was very steep, and, owing to the rain, exceedingly slippery. For some way it led through a grove of dwarf oaks, by grasping the branches of which I was enabled to support myself tolerably well; nearly at the bottom, however, where the path was most precipitous, the trees ceased altogether. Fearing to trust my legs, I determined to slide down, and put my resolution in practice, arriving at a little

shelf close by the bridge without any accident. The man, accustomed to the path, went down in the usual manner. The bridge consisted of a couple of planks and a pole flung over a chasm about ten feet wide, on the farther side of which was a precipice with a path at least quite as steep as the one down which I had come, and without any trees or shrubs, by which those who used it might support themselves. The torrent rolled about nine feet below the bridge; its channel was tortuous; on the south-east side of the bridge was a cauldron, like that on which I had looked down from the bridge over the river of the monks. The man passed over the bridge and I followed him; on the other side we stopped and turned round. The river was rushing and surging, the pot was boiling and roaring, and everything looked wild and savage; but the locality for awfulness and mysterious gloom could not compare with that on the east side of the Devil's Bridge, nor for sublimity and grandeur with that on the west.

"Here you see, sir," said the man, "the Bridge of the Offeiriad, called so, it is said, be-

cause the popes used to pass over it in the old time; and here you have the Rheidol, which, though not so smooth nor so well off for banks as the Hafren and the Gwy, gets to the sea before either of them, and as the pennill says is quite as much entitled to honour :—

"'Hafren a Wy yn hyfryd eu wêdd
A Rheidol vawr ei anrhydedd.'

Good rhyme, sir, that. I wish you would put it into Saesneg."

"I am afraid I shall make a poor hand of it," said I; "however, I will do my best.

"O pleasantly do glide along the Severn and the Wye;
But Rheidol's rough, and yet he's held by all in honour high."

"Very good rhyme that, sir! though not so good as the pennill Cymraeg. Ha, I do see that you know the two languages and are one poet. And now, sir, I must leave you, and go to the hills to my sheep, who I am afraid will be suffering in this dreadful weather. However, before I go, I should wish to see you safe over the bridge."

I shook him by the hand and retracing my

steps over the bridge began clambering up the bank on my knees.

"You will spoil your trousers, sir!" cried the man from the other side.

"I don't care if I do," said I, "provided I save my legs, which are in some danger in this place, as well as my neck which is of less consequence."

I hurried back amidst rain and wind to my friendly hospice, where, after drying my wet clothes as well as I could, I made an excellent dinner on fowl and bacon. Dinner over I took up a newspaper which was brought me, and read an article about the Russian war, which did not seem to be going on much to the advantage of the allies. Soon flinging the paper aside I stuck my feet on the stove, one on each side of the turf fire, and listened to the noises without. The bellowing of the wind down the mountain passes and the roaring of the Rheidol fall at the north side of the valley, and the rushing of the five cascades of the river Mynach, were truly awful. Perhaps I ought not to have said the five cascades of the Mynach but the Mynach cascade,

for now its five cascades had become one, extending from the chasm over which hung the bridge of Satan to the bottom of the valley.

After a time I fell into a fit of musing. I thought of the Plant de Bat: I thought of the spitties or hospitals connected with the great monastery of Ystrad Flur or Strata Florida: I thought of the remarkable bridge close by, built by a clever monk of that place to facilitate the coming of pilgrims with their votive offerings from the north to his convent: I thought of the convent built in the time of our Henry the Second by Ryce ab Gruffyd, prince of South Wales; and lastly I thought of a wonderful man who was buried in its precincts, the greatest genius which Wales, and perhaps Britain, ever produced, on whose account, and not because of old it had been a magnificent building, and the most celebrated place of popish pilgrimage in Wales I had long ago determined to visit it on my journey, a man of whose life and works the following is a brief account.

CHAPTER XVIII.

BIRTH AND EARLY YEARS OF AB GWILYM.—MORFUDD.—RELIC OF DRUIDISM.—THE MEN OF GLAMORGAN.—LEGEND OF AB GWILYM.—AB GWILYM AS A WRITER.—WONDERFUL VARIETY.—OBJECTS OF NATURE.—GRUFFYDD GRYG.

DAFYDD AB GWILYM was born about the year 1320 at a place called Bro Gynnin in the county of Cardigan. Though born in wedlock he was not conceived legitimately. His mother being discovered by her parents to be pregnant was turned out of doors by them, whereupon she went to her lover who married her, though in so doing he acted contrary to the advice of his relations. After a little time, however, a general reconciliation took place. The parents of Ab Gwilym, though highly connected, do not appear to have possessed much property. The boy was educated by his mother's brother Llewelyn ab Gwilym Fychan, a chief of Cardigan-

shire; but his principal patron in after life was Ifor a cousin of his father, surnamed Hael or the bountiful, a chieftain of Glamorganshire. This person received him within his house, made him his steward and tutor to his daughter. With this young lady Ab Gwilym speedily fell in love, and the damsel returned his passion. Ifor, however, not approving of the connection, sent his daughter to Anglesey and eventually caused her to take the veil in a nunnery of that island. Dafydd pursued her, but not being able to obtain an interview he returned to his patron, who gave him a kind reception. Under Ifor's roof he cultivated poetry with great assiduity and wonderful success. Whilst very young, being taunted with the circumstances of his birth by a brother bard called Rhys Meigan, he retorted in an ode so venomously bitter that his adversary, after hearing it, fell down and expired. Shortly after this event he was made head bard of Glamorgan by universal acclamation.

After a stay of some time with Ifor he returned to his native county and lived at Bro Gynnin. Here he fell in love with a young

lady of birth called Dyddgu, who did not favour his addresses. He did not break his heart, however, on her account, but speedily bestowed it on the fair Morfudd, whom he first saw at Rhosyr in Anglesey, to which place both had gone on a religious account. The lady after some demur consented to become his wife. Her parents refusing to sanction the union their hands were joined beneath the greenwood tree by one Madawg Benfras a bard and a great friend of Ab Gwilym. The joining of people's hands by bards, which was probably a relic of Druidism, had long been practised in Wales, and marriages of this kind were generally considered valid, and seldom set aside. The ecclesiastical law, however, did not recognize these poetical marriages, and the parents of Morfudd by appealing to the law soon severed the union. After confining the lady for a short time they bestowed her hand in legal fashion upon a chieftain of the neighbourhood, very rich but rather old, and with a hump on his back, on which account he was nick-named bow-back or little hump-back. Morfudd, however, who passed her

time in rather a dull manner with this person, which would not have been the case had she done her duty by endeavouring to make the poor man comfortable, and by visiting the sick and needy around her, was soon induced by the bard to elope with him. The lovers fled to Glamorgan, where Ifor Hael, not much to his own credit, received them with open arms, probably forgetting how he had immured his *own* daughter in a convent rather than bestow her on Ab Gwilym. Having a hunting-lodge in a forest on the banks of the lovely Taf, he allotted it to the fugitives as a residence. Ecclesiastical law, however, as strong in Wild Wales as in other parts of Europe, soon followed them into Glamorgan, and, very properly, separated them. The lady was restored to her husband, and Ab Gwilym fined to a very high amount. Not being able to pay the fine he was cast into prison; but then the men of Glamorgan arose to a man, swearing that their head bard should not remain in prison. "Then pay his fine!" said the ecclesiastical law or rather the ecclesiastical lawyer. "So we will!" said the men of

Glamorgan; and so they did. Every man put his hand into his pocket; the amount was soon raised, the fine paid and the bard set free.

Ab Gwilym did not forget this kindness of the men of Glamorgan, and to requite it wrote an address to the sun, in which he requests that luminary to visit Glamorgan, to bless it and to keep it from harm. The piece concludes with some noble lines somewhat to this effect:—

> "If every strand oppression strong
> Should arm against the son of song,
> The weary wight would find, I ween,
> A welcome in Glamorgan green."

Some time after his release he meditated a second elopement with Morfudd, and even induced her to consent to go off with him. A friend to whom he disclosed what he was thinking of doing, asking him whether he would venture a second time to take such a step, "I will," said the bard, "in the name of God and the men of Glamorgan." No second elopement, however, took place, the bard probably thinking, as has been well observed, that neither God nor the men of Glamorgan would help him a second time out of such an affair. He did not attain to any-

advanced age, but died when about sixty, some twenty years before the rising of Glendower. Some time before his death his mind fortunately took a decidedly religious turn.

He is said to have been eminently handsome in his youth, tall, slender, with yellow hair falling in ringlets down his shoulders. He is likewise said to have been a great libertine. The following story is told of him:—

"In a certain neighbourhood he had a great many mistresses, some married and others not. Once upon a time in the month of June he made a secret appointment with each of his lady-loves, the place and hour of meeting being the same for all; each was to meet him at the same hour beneath a mighty oak which stood in the midst of a forest glade. Some time before the appointed hour he went, and climbing up the oak, hid himself amidst the dense foliage of its boughs. When the hour arrived he observed all the nymphs tripping to the place of appointment; all came, to the number of twenty-four, not one stayed away. For some time they remained beneath the oak staring at

each other. At length an explanation ensued, and it appeared that they had all come to meet Ab Gwilym.

"'Oh, the treacherous monster!' cried they with one accord; 'only let him show himself and we will tear him to pieces.'

"'Will you?' said Ab Gwilym from the oak; 'here I am! let her who has been most wanton with me make the first attack upon me!'

"The females remained for some time speechless; all of a sudden, however, their anger kindled, not against the bard, but against each other. From harsh and taunting words they soon came to actions: hair was torn off; faces were scratched; blood flowed from cheek and nose. Whilst the tumult was at its fiercest Ab Gwilym slipped away."

The writer merely repeats this story, and he repeats it as concisely as possible, in order to have an opportunity of saying that he does not believe one particle of it. If he believed it he would forthwith burn the most cherished volume of the small collection of books from which he derives delight and recreation, namely, that

which contains the songs of Ab Gwilym, for he would have nothing in his possession belonging to such a heartless scoundrel as Ab Gwilym must have been had he got up the scene above described. Any common man who would expose to each other and the world a number of hapless, trusting females who had favoured him with their affections, and from the top of a tree would feast his eyes upon their agonies of shame and rage would deserve to be . . . emasculated. Had Ab Gwilym been so dead to every feeling of gratitude and honour as to play the part which the story makes him play, he would have deserved not only to be emasculated but to be scourged with harp-strings in every market-town in Wales, and to be dismissed from the service of the Muse. But the writer repeats that he does not believe one tittle of the story, though Ab Gwilym's biographer, the learned and celebrated William Owen, not only seems to believe it, but rather chuckles over it. It is the opinion of the writer that the story is of Italian origin, and that it formed part of one of the many rascally novels brought over to England after

the marriage of Lionel Duke of Clarence, the third son of Edward the Third, with Violante, daughter of Galeazzo Duke of Milan.

Dafydd Ab Gwilym has been in general considered as a songster who never employed his muse on any subject save that of love, and there can be no doubt that by far the greater number of his pieces are devoted more or less to the subject of love. But to consider him merely in the light of an amatory poet would be wrong. He has written poems of wonderful power on almost every conceivable subject. Ab Gwilym has been styled the Welsh Ovid, and with great justice, but not merely because like the Roman he wrote admirably on love. The Roman was not merely an amatory poet: let the shade of Pythagoras say whether the poet who embodied in immortal verse the oldest, the most wonderful and at the same time the most humane of all philosophy was a mere amatory poet. Let the shade of blind Homer be called up to say whether the bard who composed the tremendous line—

"Surgit ad hos clypei dominus septemplicis Ajax"—

equal to any save *one* of his own, was a mere amatory songster. Yet, diversified as the genius of the Roman was, there was no species of poetry in which he shone in which the Welshman may not be said to display equal merit. Ab Gwilym then has been fairly styled the Welsh Ovid. But he was something more —and here let there be no sneers about Welsh; the Welsh are equal in genius, intellect and learning to any people under the sun, and speak a language older than Greek, and which is one of the immediate parents of the Greek. He was something more than the Welsh Ovid; he was the Welsh Horace, and wrote light, agreeable, sportive pieces, equal to any things of the kind composed by Horace in his best moods. But he was something more; he was the Welsh Martial, and wrote pieces equal in pungency to those of the great Roman epigrammatist, perhaps more than equal, for we never heard that any of Martial's epigrams killed anybody, whereas Ab Gwilym's piece of vituperation on Rhys Meigan—pity that poets should be so virulent —caused the Welshman to fall down dead.

But he was yet something more; he could, if he pleased, be a Tyrtæus; he was no fighter—where was there ever a poet that was?—but he wrote an ode on a sword, the only warlike piece that he ever wrote, the best poem on the subject ever written in any language. Finally, he was something more; he was what not one of the great Latin poets was, a Christian; that is, in his latter days, when he began to feel the vanity of all human pursuits, when his nerves began to be unstrung, his hair to fall off, and his teeth to drop out, and he then composed sacred pieces entitling him to rank with—we were going to say Cædmon—had we done so we should have done wrong; no uninspired poet ever handled sacred subjects like the grand Saxon Skald—but which entitle him to be called a great religious poet, inferior to none but the protégé of Hilda.

Before ceasing to speak of Ab Gwilym it will be necessary to state, that his amatory pieces, which constitute more than one-half of his productions, must be divided into two classes, the purely amatory and those only partly devoted to love. His poems to Dyddgu, and the daughter

of Ifor Hael, are productions very different from those addressed to Morfudd. There can be no doubt that he had a sincere affection for the two first; there is no levity in the cowydds which he addressed to them, and he seldom introduces any other objects than those of his love. But in his cowydds addressed to Morfudd is there no levity? Is Morfudd ever prominent? His cowydds to that woman abound with humourous levity, and for the most part have far less to do with her than with natural objects—the snow, the mist, the trees of the forest, the birds of the air, and the fishes of the stream. His first piece to Morfudd is full of levity quite inconsistent with true love. It states how, after seeing her for the first time at Rhosyr in Anglesey, and falling in love with her, he sends her a present of wine by the hands of a servant, which present she refuses, casting the wine contemptuously over the head of the valet. This commencement promises little in the way of true passion, so that we are not disappointed when we read a little farther on that the bard is dead and buried, all on account of love, and

that Morfudd makes a pilgrimage to Mynyw to seek for pardon for killing him, nor when we find him begging the popish image to convey a message to her. Then presently we almost lose sight of Morfudd amidst birds, animals and trees, and we are not sorry that we do; for though Ab Gwilym is mighty in humour, great in describing the emotions of love and the beauties of the lovely, he is greatest of all in describing objects of nature; indeed in describing them he has no equal, and the writer has no hesitation in saying that in many of his cowydds in which he describes various objects of nature, by which he sends messages to Morfudd, he shows himself a far greater poet than Ovid appears in any one of his Metamorphoses. There are many poets who attempt to describe natural objects without being intimately acquainted with them, but Ab Gwilym was not one of these. No one was better acquainted with nature; he was a stroller, and there is every probability that during the greater part of the summer he had no other roof than the foliage, and that the voices of birds and animals

were more familiar to his ears than was the voice of man. During the summer months, indeed, in the early part of his life, he was, if we may credit him, generally lying perdue in the woodland or mountain recesses near the habitation of his mistress, before or after her marriage, awaiting her secret visits made, whenever she could escape the vigilance of her parents, or the watchful jealousy of her husband, and during her absence he had nothing better to do than to observe objects of nature and describe them. His ode to the Fox, one of the most admirable of his pieces, was composed on one of these occasions.

Want of space prevents the writer from saying as much as he could wish about the genius of this wonderful man, the greatest of his country's songsters, well calculated by nature to do honour to the most polished age and the most widely-spoken language. The bards his contemporaries, and those who succeeded him for several hundred years, were perfectly convinced of his superiority not only over themselves but over all the poets of the past, and

one, and a mighty one, old Iolo the bard of Glendower, went so far as to insinuate that after Ab Gwilym it would be of little avail for anyone to make verses :—

"Aed lle mae'r eang dangneff,
Ac aed y gerdd gydag ef."

To Heaven's high peace let him depart,
And with him go the minstrel art.

He was buried at Ystrad Flur, and a yew tree was planted over his grave, to which Gruffydd Gryg, a brother bard, who was at one time his enemy, but eventually became one of the most ardent of his admirers, addressed an ode, of part of which the following is a paraphrase :—

Thou noble tree ; who shelt'rest kind
The dead man's house from winter's wind ;
May lightnings never lay thee low,
Nor archer cut from thee his bow ;
Nor Crispin peel thee pegs to frame,
But may thou ever bloom the same,
A noble tree the grave to guard
Of Cambria's most illustrious bard !

CHAPTER XIX.

START FOR PLYNLIMMON.—PLYNLIMMON'S CELEBRITY.—TROED RHIW GOCH.

THE morning of the fifth of November looked rather threatening. As, however, it did not rain, I determined to set off for Plynlimmon, and returning at night to the inn, resume my journey to the south on the following day. On looking into a pocket almanac I found it was Sunday. This very much disconcerted me, and I thought at first of giving up my expedition. Eventually, however, I determined to go, for I reflected that I should be doing no harm, and that I might acknowledge the sacredness of the day by attending morning service at the little Church of England chapel which lay in my way.

The mountain of Plynlimmon to which I was bound is the third in Wales for altitude, being only inferior to Snowdon and Cadair Idris. Its proper name is Pum or Pump Lumon, signifying the five points, because towards the upper part it is divided into five hills or points. Plynlimmon is a celebrated hill on many accounts. It has been the scene of many remarkable events: in the tenth century a dreadful battle was fought on one of its spurs between the Danes and the Welsh, in which the former sustained a bloody overthrow, and in 1401 a conflict took place in one of its valleys between the Welsh under Glendower and the Flemings of Pembrokeshire, who, exasperated at having their homesteads plundered and burned by the chieftain, who was the mortal enemy of their race, assembled in considerable numbers and drove Glendower and his forces before them to Plynlimmon, where the Welshmen standing at bay a contest ensued, in which, though eventually worsted, the Flemings were at one time all but victorious. What, however, has more than anything else contributed to the celebrity of the

hill is the circumstance of its giving birth to three rivers. The first of which, the Severn, is the principal stream in Britain; the second, the Wye, the most lovely river, probably, which the world can boast of; and the third, the Rheidol, entitled to high honour from its boldness and impetuosity, and the remarkable banks between which it flows in its very short course, for there are scarcely twenty miles between the ffynnon or source of the Rheidol and the aber or place where it disembogues itself into the sea.

I started about ten o'clock on my expedition, after making, of course, a very hearty breakfast. Scarcely had I crossed the Devil's Bridge when a shower of hail and rain came on. As, however, it came down nearly perpendicularly, I put up my umbrella and laughed. The shower pelted away till I had nearly reached Spytty Cynwýl, when it suddenly left off, and the day became tolerably fine. On arriving at the Spytty I was sorry to find that there would be no service till three in the afternoon. As waiting till that time was out of the question, I pushed forward on my expedition. Leaving Pont Erwyd at some

distance on my left, I went duly north till I came to a place amongst hills where the road was crossed by an angry-looking rivulet, the same I believe which enters the Rheidol near Pont Erwyd, and which is called the Castle River. I was just going to pull off my boots and stockings in order to wade through, when I perceived a pole and a rail laid over the stream at a little distance above where I was. This rustic bridge enabled me to cross without running the danger of getting a regular sousing, for these mountain streams, even when not reaching so high as the knee, occasionally sweep the wader off his legs, as I know by my own experience. From a lad whom I presently met I learned that the place where I crossed the water was called Troed rhiw goch, or the Foot of the Red Slope.

About twenty minutes' walk from hence brought me to Castell Dyffryn, an inn about six miles distant from the Devil's Bridge, and situated near a spur of the Plynlimmon range. Here I engaged a man to show me the sources of the rivers and the other wonders of the

mountain. He was a tall, athletic fellow, dressed in brown coat, round buff hat, corduroy trousers, linen leggins and highlows, and though a Cumro had much more the appearance of a native of Tipperary than a Welshman. He was a kind of shepherd to the people of the house, who like many others in South Wales followed farming and inn-keeping at the same time.

CHAPTER XX.

THE GUIDE.—THE GREAT PLYNLIMMON.—A DANGEROUS PATH.—SOURCE OF THE RHEIDOL.—SOURCE OF THE SEVERN.—PENNILLION.—OLD TIMES AND NEW.—THE CORPSE CANDLE.—SUPPER.

LEAVING the inn my guide and myself began to ascend a steep hill just behind it. When we were about half way up I asked my companion who spoke very fair English, why the place was called the Castle.

"Because, sir," said he, "there was a castle here in the old time."

"Whereabouts was it?" said I.

"Yonder," said the man, standing still and pointing to the right. "Don't you see yonder brown spot in the valley? There the castle stood."

"But are there no remains of it?" said I. "I can see nothing but a brown spot."

"There are none, sir! but there a castle once stood, and from it the place we came from had its name, and likewise the river that runs down to Pont Erwyd."

"And who lived there?" said I.

"I don't know, sir," said the man. "But I suppose they were grand people or they would not have lived in a castle."

After ascending the hill and passing over its top we went down its western side and soon came to a black frightful bog between two hills. Beyond the bog and at some distance to the west of the two hills rose a brown mountain, not abruptly but gradually, and looking more like what the Welsh call a rhiw or slope than a mynydd or mountain.

"That, sir," said my guide, "is the grand Plynlimmon."

"It does not look much of a hill," said I.

"We are on very high ground, sir, or it would look much higher. I question, upon the whole, whether there is a higher hill in the world. God bless Pumlummon Mawr!" said he, looking with reverence towards the hill. "I

am sure I have a right to say so, for many is the good crown I have got by showing gentlefolks, like yourself, to the top of him."

"You talk of Plynlimmon Mawr, or the great Plynlymmon," said I; "where are the small ones?"

"Yonder they are," said the guide, pointing to two hills towards the north—"one is Plynlimmon Canol, and the other Plynlimmon Bach. The middle and the small Plynlimmon."

"Pumlummon," said I, "means five summits. You have pointed out only three—now, where are the other two?"

"Those two hills which we have just passed make up the five. However, I will tell your worship that there is a sixth summit. Don't you see that small hill connected with the big Pumlummon, on the right?"

"I see it very clearly," said I.

"Well, your worship, that's called Bryn y Llo—the Hill of the Calf, or the Calf Plynlimmon, which makes the sixth summit."

"Very good," said I, "and perfectly satisfactory. Now let us ascend the Big Pumlummon."

In about a quarter of an hour we reached the summit of the hill, where stood a large carn or heap of stones. I got upon the top and looked around me.

A mountainous wilderness extended on every side, a waste of russet-coloured hills, with here and there a black, craggy summit. No signs of life or cultivation were to be discovered, and the eye might search in vain for a grove or even a single tree. The scene would have been cheerless in the extreme had not a bright sun lighted up the landscape.

"This does not seem to be a country of much society," said I to my guide.

"It is not, sir. The nearest house is the inn we came from, which is now three miles behind us. Straight before you there is not one for at least ten, and on either side it is an anialwch to a vast distance. Plunlummon is not a sociable country, sir; nothing to be found in it, but here and there a few sheep or a shepherd."

"Now," said I, descending from the carn, "we will proceed to the sources of the rivers."

"The ffynnon of the Rheidol is not far off," said the guide; "it is just below the hill."

We descended the western side of the hill for some way; at length, coming to a very craggy and precipitous place, my guide stopped, and pointing with his finger into the valley below said:—

"There, sir, if you look down you can see the source of the Rheidol."

I looked down, and saw far below what appeared to be part of a small sheet of water.

"And that is the source of the Rheidol?" said I.

"Yes, sir," said my guide; "that is the ffynnon of the Rheidol."

"Well," said I; "is there no getting to it?"

"O yes! but the path, sir, as you see, is rather steep and dangerous."

"Never mind," said I. "Let us try it."

"Isn't seeing the fountain sufficient for you, sir?"

"By no means," said I. "It is not only necessary for me to see the sources of the rivers,

but to drink of them, in order that in after times I may be able to harangue about them with a tone of confidence and authority."

"Then follow me, sir; but please to take care, for this path is more fit for sheep or shepherds than gentlefolk."

And a truly bad path I found it; so bad indeed that before I had descended twenty yards I almost repented having ventured. I had a capital guide, however, who went before and told me where to plant my steps. There was one particularly bad part, being little better than a sheer precipice; but even here I got down in safety with the assistance of my guide, and a minute afterwards found myself at the source of the Rheidol.

The source of the Rheidol is a small beautiful lake, about a quarter of a mile in length. It is overhung on the east and north by frightful crags, from which it is fed by a number of small rills. The water is of the deepest blue and of very considerable depth. The banks, except to the north and east, slope gently down, and are clad with soft and beautiful moss. The

river, of which it is the head, emerges at the south-western side, and brawls away in the shape of a considerable brook, amidst moss and rushes down a wild glen tending to the south. To the west the prospect is bounded, at a slight distance, by high, swelling ground. If few rivers have a more wild and wondrous channel than the Rheidol, fewer still have a more beautiful and romantic source.

After kneeling down and drinking freely of the lake I said:

"Now, where are we to go to next?"

"The nearest ffynnon to that of the Rheidol, sir, is the ffynnon of the Severn."

"Very well," said I; "let us now go and see the ffynnon of the Severn!"

I followed my guide over a hill to the north-west into a valley, at the farther end of which I saw a brook streaming apparently to the south, where was an outlet.

"That brook," said the guide, "is the young Severn." The brook came from round the side of a very lofty rock, singularly variegated, black and white, the northern summit presenting

something of the appearance of the head of a horse. Passing round this crag we came to a fountain surrounded with rushes, out of which the brook, now exceedingly small, came murmuring.

"The crag above," said my guide, "is called Craig y Cefyl, or the Rock of the Horse, and this spring at its foot is generally called the ffynnon of the Hafren. However, drink not of it, master; for the ffynnon of the Hafren is higher up the nant. Follow me, and I will presently show you the real ffynnon of the Hafren."

I followed him up a narrow and very steep dingle. Presently we came to some beautiful little pools of water in the turf, which was here remarkably green.

"These are very pretty pools, an't they, master?" said my companion. "Now, if I was a false guide I might bid you stoop and drink, saying that these were the sources of the Severn; but I am a true cyfarwydd and therefore tell you not to drink, for these pools are not the sources of the Hafren, no more than the spring

below. The ffynnon of the Severn is higher up the nant. Don't fret, however, but follow me, and we shall be there in a minute."

So I did as he bade me, following him without fretting higher up the nant. Just at the top he halted and said: "Now, master, I have conducted you to the source of the Severn. I have considered the matter deeply, and have come to the conclusion that here, and here only, is the true source. Therefore stoop down and drink, in full confidence that you are taking possession of the Holy Severn."

The source of the Severn is a little pool of water some twenty inches long, six wide, and about three deep. It is covered at the bottom with small stones, from between which the water gushes up. It is on the left-hand side of the nant, as you ascend, close by the very top. An unsightly heap of black turf-earth stands just above it to the north. Turf-heaps, both large and small, are in abundance in the vicinity.

After taking possession of the Severn by drinking at its source, rather a shabby source

for so noble a stream, I said, "Now let us go to the fountain of the Wye."

"A quarter of an hour will take us to it, your honour," said the guide, leading the way.

The source of the Wye, which is a little pool, not much larger than that which constitutes the fountain of the Severn, stands near the top of a grassy hill which forms part of the Great Plynlimmon. The stream after leaving its source runs down the hill towards the east, and then takes a turn to the south. The fountains of the Severn and the Wye are in close proximity to each other. That of the Rheidol stands somewhat apart from both, as if, proud of its own beauty, it disdained the other two for their homeliness. All three are contained within the compass of a mile.

"And now I suppose, sir, that our work is done, and we may go back to where we came from," said my guide, as I stood on the grassy hill after drinking copiously of the fountain of the Wye.

"We may," said I; "but before we do I

must repeat some lines made by a man who visited these sources, and experienced the hospitality of a chieftain in this neighbourhood four hundred years ago. Then taking off my hat I lifted up my voice and sang:—

"From high Plynlimmon's shaggy side
Three streams in three directions glide;
To thousands at their mouths who tarry
Honey, gold and mead they carry.
Flow also from Plynlimmon high
Three streams of generosity;
The first, a noble stream indeed,
Like rills of Mona runs with mead;
The second bears from vineyards thick
Wine to the feeble and the sick;
The third, till time shall be no more,
Mingled with gold shall silver pour."

"Nice pennillion, sir, I dare say," said my guide, "provided a person could understand them. What's meant by all this mead, wine, gold and silver?"

"Why," said I, "the bard meant to say that Plynlimmon, by means of its three channels, sends blessings and wealth in three different directions to distant places, and that the person whom he came to visit, and who lived on Plynlimmon, distributed his bounty in three different ways, giving mead to thousands at his banquets,

wine from the vineyards of Gascony to the sick and feeble of the neighbourhood, and gold and silver to those who were willing to be tipped, amongst whom no doubt was himself, as poets have never been above receiving a present."

"Nor above asking for one, your honour; there's a prydydd in this neighbourhood, who will never lose a shilling for want of asking for it. Now, sir, have the kindness to tell me the name of the man who made those pennillion."

"Lewis Glyn Cothi," said I; "at least, it was he who made the pennillion from which those verses are translated."

"And what was the name of the gentleman whom he came to visit?"

"His name," said I, "was Dafydd ab Thomas Vychan."

"And where did he live?"

"Why, I believe, he lived at the castle, which you told me once stood on the spot which you pointed out as we came up. At any rate, he lived somewhere upon Plynlimmon."

"I wish there was some such rich gentleman

at present living on Plynlimmon," said my guide; "one of that sort is much wanted."

"You can't have everything at the same time," said I: "formerly you had a chieftain who gave away wine and mead, and occasionally a bit of gold or silver, but then no travellers and tourists came to see the wonders of the hills, for at that time nobody cared anything about hills; at present you have no chieftain, but plenty of visitors who come to see the hills and the sources and scatter plenty of gold about the neighbourhood."

We now bent our steps homeward, bearing slightly to the north, going over hills and dales covered with gorse and ling. My guide walked with a calm and deliberate gait, yet I had considerable difficulty in keeping up with him. There was, however, nothing surprising in this; he was a shepherd walking on his own hill, and having first-rate wind, and knowing every inch of the ground, made great way without seeming to be in the slightest hurry: I would not advise a road-walker, even if he be a first-rate one, to attempt to compete with a shepherd on his own,

or indeed any hill; should he do so, the conceit would soon be taken out of him.

After a little time we saw a rivulet running from the west.

"This ffrwd," said my guide, "is called Frennig. It here divides shire Trefaldwyn from Cardiganshire, one in North and the other in South Wales."

Shortly afterwards we came to a hillock of rather a singular shape.

"This place, sir," said he, "is called Eisteddfa."

"Why is it called so?" said I. "Eisteddfa means the place where people sit down."

"It does so," said the guide, "and it is called the place of sitting because three men from different quarters of the world, once met here and one proposed that they should sit down."

"And did they?" said I.

"They did, sir; and when they had sat down they told each other their histories."

"I should be glad to know what their histories were," said I.

"I can't exactly tell you what they were, but I have heard say that there was a great deal in them about the Tylwyth Teg or fairies."

"Do you believe in fairies?" said I.

"I do, sir; but they are very seldom seen, and when they are they do no harm to anybody. I only wish there were as few corpse-candles as there are Tylwith Teg, and that they did as little harm."

"They foreshow people's deaths, don't they?" said I.

"They do, sir; but that's not all the harm they do. They are very dangerous for anybody to meet with. If they come bump up against you when you are walking carelessly it's generally all over with you in this world. I'll give you an example: A man returning from market from Llan Eglos to Llan Curig, not far from Plynlimmon, was struck down dead as a horse not long ago by a corpse-candle. It was a rainy, windy night, and the wind and rain were blowing in his face, so that he could not see it, or get out

of its way. And yet the candle was not abroad on purpose to kill the man. The business that it was about was to prognosticate the death of a woman who lived near the spot and whose husband dealt in wool—poor thing! she was dead and buried in less than a fortnight. Ah, master, I wish that corpse-candles were as few and as little dangerous as the Tylwith Teg or fairies."

We returned to the inn where I settled with the honest fellow, adding a trifle to what I had agreed to give him. Then sitting down I called for a large measure of ale and invited him to partake of it. He accepted my offer with many thanks and bows, and as we sat and drank our ale we had a great deal of discourse about the places we had visited. The ale being finished I got up and said :—

"I must now be off for the Devil's Bridge!"

Whereupon he also arose, and offering me his hand, said—

"Farewell, master; I shall never forget you: were all the gentlefolks who come here to see

the sources like you, we should indeed feel no want in these hills of such a gentleman as is spoken of in the pennillion."

The sun was going down as I left the inn. I recrossed the streamlet by means of the pole and rail. The water was running with much less violence than in the morning, and was considerably lower. The evening was calm and beautifully cool, with a slight tendency to frost. I walked along with a bounding and elastic step, and never remember to have felt more happy and cheerful.

I reached the hospice at about six o'clock, a bright moon shining upon me, and found a capital supper awaiting me, which I enjoyed exceedingly.

How one enjoys one's supper at one's inn after a good day's walk, provided one has the proud and glorious consciousness of being able to pay one's reckoning on the morrow!

CHAPTER XXI.

A MORNING VIEW.—HAFOD YCHDRYD.—THE MONUMENT.—FAIRY-LOOKING PLACE.—EDWARD LHUYD.

THE morning of the sixth was bright and glorious. As I looked from the window of the upper sitting-room of the hospice the scene which presented itself was wild and beautiful to a degree. The oak-covered tops of the volcanic crater were gilded with the brightest sunshine, whilst the eastern sides remained in dark shade and the gap or narrow entrance to the north in shadow yet darker, in the midst of which shone the silver of the Rheidol cataract. Should I live a hundred years I shall never forget the wild fantastic beauty of that morning scene.

I left the friendly hospice at about nine o'clock to pursue my southern journey. By

this time the morning had lost much of its beauty, and the dull grey sky characteristic of November began to prevail. The way lay up a hill to the south-east; on my left was a glen down which the river of the Monk rolled with noise and foam. The country soon became naked and dreary and continued so for some miles. At length coming to the top of a hill I saw a park before me, through which the road led after passing under a stately gateway. I had reached the confines of the domain of Hafod.

Hafod Ychdryd, or the summer mansion of Uchtryd, has from time immemorial been the name of a dwelling on the side of a hill above the Ystwyth, looking to the east. At first it was a summer boothie or hunting lodge to Welsh chieftains, but subsequently expanded into the roomy, comfortable dwelling of Welsh squires, where hospitality was much practised and bards and harpers liberally encouraged. Whilst belonging to an ancient family of the name of Johnes, several members of which made no inconsiderable figure in literature, it was cele-

brated, far and wide, for its library, in which was to be found, amongst other treasures, a large collection of Welsh manuscripts on various subjects—history, medicine, poetry and romance. The house, however, and the library were both destroyed in a dreadful fire which broke out. This fire is generally called the great fire of Hafod, and some of those who witnessed it have been heard to say that its violence was so great that burning rafters mixed with flaming books were hurled high above the summits of the hills. The loss of the house was a matter of triviality compared with that of the library. The house was soon rebuilt and probably, phœnix-like, looked all the better for having been burnt, but the library could never be restored. On the extinction of the family, the last hope of which, an angelic girl, faded away in the year 1811, the domain became the property of the late Duke of Newcastle, a kind and philanthropic nobleman and a great friend of agriculture, who held it for many years and considerably improved it. After his decease it was purchased by the head of an ancient Lancashire family, who used

the modern house as a summer residence, as the Welsh chieftains had used the wooden boothie of old.

I went to a kind of lodge, where I had been told that I should find somebody who would admit me to the church, which stood within the grounds and contained a monument which I was very desirous of seeing, partly from its being considered one of the master-pieces of the great Chantrey, and partly because it was a memorial to the lovely child, the last scion of the old family who had possessed the domain. A good-looking young woman, the only person whom I saw, on my telling my errand forthwith took a key and conducted me to the church. The church was a neat edifice with rather a modern look. It exhibited nothing remarkable without, and only one thing remarkable within, namely the monument, which was indeed worthy of notice, and which, had Chantrey executed nothing else, might well have entitled him to be considered, what the world has long pronounced him, the prince of British sculptors.

This monument, which is of the purest marble,

is placed on the eastern side of the church, below a window of stained glass, and represents a truly affecting scene: a lady and gentleman are standing over a dying girl of angelic beauty who is extended on a couch, and from whose hand a volume, the Book of Life, is falling. The lady is weeping.

Beneath is the following inscription—

To the Memory of
Mary
The only child of Thomas and Jane Johnes
Who died in 1811
After a few days' sickness
This monument is dedicated
By her parents.

An inscription worthy, by its simplicity and pathos, to stand below such a monument.

After presenting a trifle to the woman, who to my great surprise could not speak a word of English, I left the church, and descended the side of the hill, near the top of which it stands. The scenery was exceedingly beautiful. Below me was a bright green valley, at the bottom of which the Ystwyth ran brawling, now hid amongst groves, now showing a long stretch of water. Beyond the river to the east was a noble

mountain, richly wooded. The Ystwyth, after a circuitous course, joins the Rheidol near the strand of the Irish Channel, which the united rivers enter at a place called Aber Ystwyth, where stands a lovely town of the same name, which sprang up under the protection of a baronial castle, still proud and commanding even in its ruins, built by Strongbow the conqueror of the great western isle. Near the lower part of the valley the road tended to the south, up and down through woods and bowers, the scenery still ever increasing in beauty. At length, after passing through a gate and turning round a sharp corner, I suddenly beheld Hafod on my right hand, to the west at a little distance above me, on a rising ground, with a noble range of mountains behind it.

A truly fairy place it looked, beautiful but fantastic, in the building of which three styles of architecture seemed to have been employed. At the southern end was a Gothic tower; at the northern an Indian pagoda; the middle part had much the appearance of a Grecian villa. The walls were of resplendent white-

ness, and the windows which were numerous shone with beautiful gilding. Such was modern Hafod, a strange contrast, no doubt, to the hunting lodge of old.

After gazing at this house of eccentric taste for about a quarter of an hour, sometimes with admiration, sometimes with a strong disposition to laugh, I followed the road, which led past the house in nearly a southerly direction. Presently the valley became more narrow, and continued narrowing till there was little more room than was required for the road and the river, which ran deep below it on the left-hand side. Presently I came to a gate, the boundary in the direction in which I was going of the Hafod domain.

Here, when about to leave Hafod, I shall devote a few lines to a remarkable man whose name should be ever associated with the place. Edward Lhuyd was born in the vicinity of Hafod about the period of the Restoration. His father was a clergyman, who after giving him an excellent education at home sent him to Oxford, at which seat of learning he obtained an honourable degree, officiated for several years as tutor,

and was eventually made custodiary of the Ashmolean Museum. From his early youth he devoted himself with indefatigable zeal to the acquisition of learning. He was fond of natural history and British antiquities, but his favourite pursuit and that in which he principally distinguished himself was the study of the Celtic dialects; and it is but doing justice to his memory to say, that he was not only the best Celtic scholar of his time, but that no one has arisen since worthy to be considered his equal in Celtic erudition. Partly at the expense of the university, partly at that of various powerful individuals who patronized him, he travelled through Ireland, the Western Highlands, Wales, Cornwall and Armorica, for the purpose of collecting Celtic manuscripts. He was particularly successful in Ireland and Wales. Several of the most precious Irish manuscripts in Oxford and also in the Chandos Library were of Lhuyd's collection, and to him the old hall at Hafod was chiefly indebted for its treasures of ancient British literature. Shortly after returning to Oxford from his Celtic wanderings he sat down to the com-

position of a grand work in three parts, under the title of Archæologia Britannica, which he had long projected. The first was to be devoted to the Celtic dialects; the second to British Antiquities, and the third to the natural history of the British Isles. He only lived to complete the first part. It contains various Celtic grammars and vocabularies, to each of which there is a preface written by Lhuyd in the particular dialect to which the vocabulary or grammar is devoted. Of all these prefaces the one to the Irish is the most curious and remarkable. The first part of the Archæologia was published at Oxford in 1707, two years before the death of the author. Of his correspondence, which was very extensive, several letters have been published, all of them relating to philology, antiquities, and natural history.

CHAPTER XXII.

AN ADVENTURE.—SPYTTY YSTWYTH.—WORMWOOD.

SHORTLY after leaving the grounds of Hafod I came to a bridge over the Ystwyth. I crossed it, and was advancing along the road which led apparently to the south-east, when I came to a company of people who seemed to be loitering about. It consisted entirely of young men and women, the former with crimson favours, the latter in the garb of old Wales, blue tunics and sharp crowned hats. Going up to one of the young women I said "Peth yw? what's the matter!"

"Priodas (a marriage)," she replied, after looking at me attentively. I then asked her the name of the bridge, whereupon she gave a

broad grin, and after some little time replied: "Pont y Groes; (the bridge of the cross)." I was about to ask her some other question when she turned away with a loud chuckle, and said something to another wench near her, who grinning yet more uncouthly, said something to a third, who grinned too, and lifting up her hands and spreading her fingers wide said: "Dyn oddi dir y Gogledd—a man from the north country, hee, hee!" Forthwith there was a general shout—the wenches crying: "A man from the north country, hee, hee!" and the fellows crying: "A man from the north country, hoo, hoo!"

"Is this the way you treat strangers in the south?" said I. But I had scarcely uttered the words when with redoubled shouts the company exclaimed: "There's Cumraeg! there's pretty Cumraeg. Go back, David, to shire Fon! That Cumraeg wont pass here."

Finding they disliked my Welsh I had recourse to my own language. "Really," said I in English, "such conduct is unaccountable. What do you mean?" But this only made mat-

ters worse, for the shouts grew louder still, and every one cried: "There's pretty English! Well, if I couldn't speak better English than that I'd never speak English at all. No, David; if you must speak at all, stick to Cumraeg." Then forthwith all the company set themselves in violent motion: the women rushing up to me with their palms and fingers spread out in my face, without touching me, however, as they wheeled round me at about a yard's distance, crying: "A man from the north country, hee, hee!" and the fellows acting just in the same way, rushing up with their hands spread out, and then wheeling round me with cries of "A man from the north country, hoo, hoo!" I was so enraged that I made for a heap of stones by the road-side, intending to take some up and fling them at the company. Reflecting, however, that I had but one pair of hands and the company at least forty, and that by such an attempt at revenge I should only make myself ridiculous, I gave up my intention, and continued my journey at a rapid pace, pursued for a long way by "hee, hee," and "hoo, hoo," and: "Go

back, David, to your goats in Anglesey, you are not wanted here."

I began to descend a hill forming the eastern side of an immense valley, at the bottom of which rolled the river. Beyond the valley to the west was an enormous hill, on the top of which was a most singular-looking crag, seemingly leaning in the direction of the south. On the right-hand side of the road were immense works of some kind in full play and activity, for engines were clanging and puffs of smoke were ascending from tall chimneys. On inquiring of a boy the name of the works I was told that they were called the works of Level Vawr, or the Great Level, a mining establishment; but when I asked him the name of the hill with the singular peak, on the other side of the valley, he shook his head and said he did not know. Near the top of the hill I came to a village consisting of a few cottages and a shabby-looking church. A rivulet descending from some crags to the east crosses the road, which leads through the place, and tumbling down the valley, joins the Ystwyth at the bottom. Seeing a woman

standing at the door I enquired the name of the village.

"Spytty Ystwyth," she replied, but she, no more than the boy down below, could tell me the name of the strange-looking hill across the valley. This second Spytty or monastic hospital, which I had come to, looked in every respect an inferior place to the first. Whatever its former state might have been, nothing but dirt and wretchedness were now visible. Having reached the top of the hill I entered upon a wild moory region. Presently I crossed a little bridge over a rivulet, and seeing a small house on the shutter of which was painted 'cwrw,' I went in, sat down on an old chair which I found vacant, and said in English to an old woman who sat knitting by the window: "Bring me a pint of ale!"

"Dim Saesneg!" said the old woman.

"I told you to bring me a pint of ale;" said I to her in her own language.

"You shall have it immediately, sir;" said she, and going to a cask, she filled a jug with ale, and after handing it to me resumed her seat and knitting.

"It is not very bad ale," said I, after I had tasted it.

"It ought to be very good," said the old woman, "for I brewed it myself."

"The goodness of ale," said I, "does not so much depend on who brews it as on what it is brewed of. Now there is something in this ale which ought not to be. What is it made of?"

"Malt and hop."

"It tastes very bitter," said I. "Is there no chwerwlys* in it?"

"I do not know what chwerwlys is," said the old woman.

"It is what the Saxons call wormwood," said I.

"O, wermod. No, there is no wermod in my beer, at least not much."

"O, then there is some; I thought there was. Why do you put such stuff into your ale?"

"We are glad to put it in sometimes when hops are dear, as they are this year. Moreover,

* Bitter root.

wermod is not bad stuff, and some folks like the taste better than that of hops."

"Well, I don't. However, the ale is drinkable. What am I to give you for the pint?"

"You are to give me a groat."

"That is a great deal," said I, "for a groat I ought to have a pint of ale made of the best malt and hops."

"I give you the best I can afford. One must live by what one sells. I do not find that easy work."

"Is this house your own?"

"O no! I pay a rent for it, and not a cheap one."

"Have you a husband?"

"I had, but he is dead."

"Have you any children?"

"I had three, but they are dead too, and buried with my husband at the Monastery."

"Where is the Monastery?"

"A good way farther on, at the strath beyond Rhyd Fendigaid."

"What is the name of the little river by the house?"

"Avon Marchnad (Market River)."

"Why is it called Avon Marchnad?"

"Truly, gentleman, I cannot tell you."

I went on sipping my ale and finding fault with its bitterness till I had finished it, when getting up I gave the old lady her groat, bade her farewell and departed.

CHAPTER XXIII.

PONT Y RHYD FENDIGAID.—STRATA FLORIDA.—THE YEW-TREE.—IDOLATRY.—THE TEIVI.—THE LLOSTLYDAN.

AND now for the resting-place of Dafydd Ab Gwilym! After wandering for some miles towards the south over a bleak moory country I came to a place called Fair Rhos, a miserable village, consisting of a few half-ruined cottages, situated on the top of a hill. From the hill I looked down on a wide valley of a russet colour, along which a river ran towards the south. The whole scene was cheerless. Sullen hills were all around. Descending the hill I entered a large village divided into two by the river, which here runs from east to west, but presently makes a turn. There was much mire in the street; immense swine lay in the mire, who turned up their

snouts at me as I passed. Women in Welsh hats stood in the mire, along with men without any hats at all, but with short pipes in their mouths; they were talking together; as I passed, however, they held their tongues, the women leering contemptuously at me, the men glaring sullenly at me, and causing tobacco smoke to curl in my face; on my taking off my hat, however, and enquiring the way to the Monachlog, everybody was civil enough, and twenty voices told me the way to the Monastery. I asked the name of the river:

"The Teivi, sir: the Teivi."

"The name of the bridge?"

"Pont y Rhyd Fendigaid—the Bridge of the Blessed Ford, sir."

I crossed the Bridge of the Blessed Ford, and presently leaving the main road I turned to the east by a dunghill, up a narrow lane parallel with the river. After proceeding a mile up the lane, amidst trees and copses, and crossing a little brook, which runs into the Teivi, out of which I drank, I saw before me in the midst of a field, in which were tombstones and broken

ruins, a rustic-looking church; a farm-house stood near it, in the garden of which stood the framework of a large gateway. I crossed over into the churchyard, ascended a green mound, and looked about me. I was now in the very midst of the Monachlog Ystrad Flur, the celebrated monastery of Strata Florida, to which in old times Popish pilgrims from all parts of the world repaired. The scene was solemn and impressive: on the north side of the river a large bulky hill looked down upon the ruins and the church, and on the south side, some way behind the farmhouse, was another which did the same. Rugged mountains formed the background of the valley to the east, down from which came murmuring the fleet but shallow Teivi. Such is the scenery which surrounds what remains of Strata Florida: those scanty broken ruins compose all which remains of that celebrated monastery, in which kings, saints and mitred abbots were buried, and in which, or in whose precincts, was buried Dafydd Ab Gwilym, the greatest genius of the Cimbric race and one of the first poets of the world.

After standing for some time on the mound I descended, and went up to the church. I found the door fastened, but obtained through a window a tolerable view of the interior, which presented an appearance of the greatest simplicity. I then strolled about the churchyard looking at the tombstones, which were humble enough and for the most part modern. I would give something, said I, to know whereabouts in this neighbourhood Ab Gwilym lies. That, however, is a secret that no one can reveal to me. At length I came to a yew-tree which stood just by the northern wall which is at a slight distance from the Teivi. It was one of two trees, both of the same species, which stood in the churchyard, and appeared to be the oldest of the two. Who knows, said I, but this is the tree that was planted over Ab Gwilym's grave, and to which Gruffydd Gryg wrote an ode? I looked at it attentively, and thought that there was just a possibility of its being the identical tree. If it was, however, the benison of Gruffydd Gryg had not had exactly the effect which he intended, for either lightning or the force of wind had splitten

off a considerable part of the head and trunk, so that though one part of it looked strong and blooming, the other was white and spectral. Nevertheless, relying on the possibility of its being the sacred tree, I behaved just as I should have done had I been quite certain of the fact: Taking off my hat I knelt down and kissed its root, repeating lines from Gruffydd Gryg, with which I blended some of my own in order to accommodate what I said to present circumstances :—

"O tree of yew, which here I spy,
By Ystrad Flur's blest monast'ry,
Beneath thee lies, by cold Death bound,
The tongue for sweetness once renown'd.

Better for thee thy boughs to wave,
Though scath'd, above Ab Gwilym's grave,
Than stand in pristine glory drest
Where some ignobler bard doth rest ;
I'd rather hear a taunting rhyme
From one who'll live through endless time,
Than hear my praises chanted loud
By poets of the vulgar crowd."

I had left the churchyard, and was standing near a kind of garden, at some little distance from the farmhouse, gazing about me and meditating, when a man came up attended by a large dog. He had rather a youthful look, was of the

middle size and dark complexioned. He was respectably drest, except that upon his head he wore a common hairy cap.

"Good evening," said I to him in Welsh.

"Good evening, gentleman," said he in the same language.

"Have you much English?" said I.

"Very little; I can only speak a few words."

"Are you the farmer?"

"Yes! I farm the greater part of the Strath."

"I suppose the land is very good here?"

"Why do you suppose so?"

"Because the monks built their house here in the old time, and the monks never built their houses except on good land."

"Well, I must say the land is good; indeed I do not think there is any so good in Shire Aberteifi."

"I suppose you are surprised to see me here; I came to see the old Monachlog."

"Yes; gentleman! I saw you looking about it."

"Am I welcome to see it?"

"Croesaw! gwr boneddig, croesaw! many, many welcomes to you, gentleman!"

"Do many people come to see the monastery?"

Farmer.—Yes! many gentlefolks come to see it in the summer time.

Myself.—It is a poor place now.

Farmer.—Very poor, I wonder any gentlefolks come to look at it.

Myself.—It was a wonderful place once; you merely see the ruins of it now. It was pulled down at the Reformation.

Farmer.—Why was it pulled down then?

Myself.—Because it was a house of idolatry to which people used to resort by hundreds to worship images. Had you lived at that time you would have seen people down on their knees before stocks and stones, worshipping them, kissing them and repeating pennillion to them.

Farmer.—What fools! How thankful I am that I live in wiser days. If such things were going on in the old Monachlog it was high time to pull it down.

Myself.—What kind of a rent do you pay for your land?

Farmer.—O, rather a stiffish one.

Myself.—Two pound an acre?

Farmer.—Two pound an acre! I wish I paid no more!

Myself.—Well! I think that would be quite enough. In the time of the old monastery you might have had the land at two shillings an acre.

Farmer.—Might I? Then those couldn't have been such bad times, after all.

Myself.—I beg your pardon! They were horrible times—times in which there were monks and friars and graven images, which people kissed and worshipped and sang pennillion to. Better pay three pounds an acre and live on crusts and water in the present enlightened days than pay two shillings an acre and sit down to beef and ale three times a day in the old superstitious times. *Indeed!*

Farmer.—Well, I scarcely know what to say to that.

Myself.—What do you call that high hill on the other side of the river?

Farmer.—I call that hill Bunk Pen Bannedd.

Myself.—Is the source of the Teivi far from here?

Farmer.—The head of the Teivi is about two miles from here high up in the hills.

Myself.—What kind of place is the head of the Teivi?

Farmer.—The head of the Teivi is a small lake about fifty yards long and twenty across.

Myself.—Where does the Teivi run to?

Farmer.—The Teivi runs to the sea, which it enters at a place which the Cumry call Aber Teivi and the Saxons Cardigan.

Myself.—Don't you call Cardiganshire Shire Aber Teivi?

Farmer.—We do.

Myself.—Are there many gleisiaid in the Teivi?

Farmer.—Plenty and salmons too—that is, farther down. The best place for salmon and gleisiaid is a place, a great way down the stream, called Dinas Emlyn.

Myself.—Do you know an animal called Llostlydan?

Farmer.—No, I do not know that beast.

Myself.—There used to be many in the Teivi.

Farmer.—What kind of beast is the Llostlydan?

Myself.—A beast with a broad tail, on which account the old Cumry did call him Llostlydan. Clever beast he was; made himself house of wood in middle of the river, with two doors, so that when hunter came upon him he might have good chance of escape. Hunter often after him, because he had skin good to make hat.

Farmer.—Ha, I wish I could catch that beast now in Teivi.

Myself.—Why so?

Farmer.—Because I want hat. Would make myself hat of his skin.

Myself.—O, you could not make yourself a hat even if you had the skin

Farmer.—Why not? Shot coney in Bunk Pen Banedd; made myself cap of his skin.

So, why not make hat of skin of broadtail, should I catch him in Teivi?

Myself.—How far is it to Tregaron?

Farmer.—'Tis ten miles from here, and eight from the Rhyd Fendigaid.

Myself.—Must I go back to Rhyd Fendigaid to get to Tregaron?

Farmer.—You must.

Myself.—Then I must be going, for the night is coming down. Farewell!

Farmer.—Farvel, Saxon gentleman!

CHAPTER XXIV.

NOCTURNAL JOURNEY.—MAES Y LLYN.—THE FIGURE.—EARL OF LEICESTER.—TWM SHONE CATTI.—THE FARMER AND BULL.—TOM AND THE FARMER.—THE CAVE.—THE THREAT.—TOM A JUSTICE.—THE BIG WIGS.—TREGARON.

It was dusk by the time I had regained the high-road by the village of the Rhyd Fendigaid.

As I was yet eight miles from Tregaron, the place where I intended to pass the night, I put on my best pace. In a little time I reached a bridge over a stream which seemed to carry a considerable tribute to the Teivi.

"What is the name of this bridge?" said I to a man riding in a cart whom I met almost immediately after I had crossed the bridge.

"Pont Vleer," methought he said, but as his voice was husky and indistinct, very much like that of a person somewhat the worse for liquor, I am by no means positive.

It was now very dusk, and by the time I had advanced about a mile farther dark night settled down, which compelled me to abate my pace a little, more especially as the road was by no means first-rate. I had come, to the best of my computation, about four miles from the Rhyd Fendigaid when the moon began partly to show itself, and presently by its glimmer I saw some little way off on my right hand what appeared to be a large sheet of water. I went on, and in about a minute saw two or three houses on the left, which stood nearly opposite to the object which I had deemed to be water, and which now appeared to be about fifty yards distant in a field which was separated from the road by a slight hedge. Going up to the principal house I knocked, and a woman making her appearance at the door, I said :—

"I beg pardon for troubling you, but I wish to know the name of this place."

"Maes y Llyn—The Field of the Lake," said the woman.

"And what is the name of the lake?" said I.

"I do not know," said she; "but the place where it stands is called Maes Llyn, as I said before."

"Is the lake deep?" said I.

"Very deep," said she.

"How deep?" said I.

"Over the tops of the houses," she replied.

"Any fish in the lake?"

"O yes! plenty."

"What fish?"

"O there are llysowen, and the fish we call ysgetten."

"Eels and tench," said I; "anything else?"

"I do not know," said the woman; "folks say that there used to be queer beast in the lake, water-cow used to come out at night and eat people's clover in the fields."

"Pooh," said I; "that was merely some person's cow or horse, turned out at night to fill its belly at other folks' expense."

"Perhaps so," said the woman; "have you any more questions to ask?"

"Only one," said I; "how far is it to Tregaron?"

"About three mile: are you going there?"

"Yes, I am going to Tregaron."

"Pity that you did not come a little time ago," said the woman; "you might then have had pleasant company on your way; pleasant man stopped here to light his pipe; he too going to Tregaron."

"It doesn't matter," said I; "I am never happier than when keeping my own company." Bidding the woman good night, I went on. The moon now shone tolerably bright, so that I could see my way, and I sped on at a great rate. I had proceeded nearly half a mile, when I thought I heard steps in advance, and presently saw a figure at some little distance before me. The individual, probably hearing the noise of my approach, soon turned round and stood still. As I drew near I distinguished a stout burly figure of a man, seemingly about sixty, with a short pipe in his mouth.

"Ah, is it you?" said the figure, in English, taking the pipe out of his mouth; "good evening; I am glad to see you." Then shaking some burning embers out of his pipe,

he put it into his pocket, and trudged on beside me.

"Why are you glad to see me?" said I, slackening my pace; "I am a stranger to you; at any rate, you are to me."

"Always glad to see English gentleman," said the figure; "always glad to see him."

"How do you know that I am an English gentleman?" said I.

"O, I know English gentleman at first sight; no one like him in the whole world."

"Have you seen many English gentlemen?" said I.

"O yes, have seen plenty when I have been up in London."

"Have you been much in London?"

"O yes; when I was a drover was up in London every month."

"And were you much in the society of English gentlemen when you were there?"

"O yes; a great deal."

"Whereabouts in London did you chiefly meet them?"

"Whereabouts? Oh, in Smithfield."

"Dear me!" said I; "I thought that was rather a place for butchers than gentlemen."

"Great place for gentlemen, I assure you," said the figure; "met there the finest gentleman I ever saw in my life; very grand, but kind and affable, like every true gentleman. Talked to me a great deal about Anglesey runts, and Welsh legs of mutton, and at parting shook me by the hand, and asked me to look in upon him, if I was ever down in his parts, and see his sheep and taste his ale.

"Do you know who he was?" said I.

"O yes; know all about him; Earl of Leicester, from county of Norfolk; fine old man indeed—you very much like him—speak just in same way."

"Have you given up the business of drover long?" said I.

"O yes; given him up a long time, ever since domm'd railroad came into fashion."

"And what do you do now?" said I.

"O, not much; live upon my means; picked up a little property, a few sticks, just enough for old crow to build him nest with—sometimes,

however, undertake a little job for neighbouring people and get a little money. Can do everything in small way, if necessary; build little bridge, if asked;—Jack of all Trades—live very comfortably."

"And where do you live?"

"O, not very far from Tregaron."

"And what kind of place is Tregaron?"

"O, very good place; not quite so big as London, but very good place."

"What is it famed for?" said I.

"O, famed for very good ham; best ham at Tregaron in all Shire Cardigan."

"Famed for anything else?"

"O yes! famed for great man, clever thief, Twm Shone Catti, who was born there."

"Dear me!" said I; "when did he live?"

"O, long time ago, more than two hundred year."

"And what became of him?" said I; "was he hung?"

"Hung, no! only stupid thief hung. Twm Shone clever thief; died rich man, justice of the peace and mayor of Brecon."

"Very singular," said I, "that they should make a thief mayor of Brecon."

"O Twm Shone Catti very different from other thieves; funny fellow, and so good-natured that everybody loved him—so they made him magistrate, not, however, before he had become very rich man by marrying great lady who fell in love with him."

"Ah, ah," said I; "that's the way of the world. He became rich, so they made him a magistrate; had he remained poor they would have hung him in spite of all his fun and good-nature. Well, can't you tell me some of the things he did?"

"O yes, can tell you plenty. One day in time of fair Tom Shone Catti goes into iron-monger's shop in Llandovery. 'Master,' says he, 'I want to buy a good large iron porridge pot; please to show me some.' So the man brings out three or four big iron porridge pots, the very best he has. Tom takes up one and turns it round. 'This look very good porridge pot,' said he; 'I think it will suit me.' Then he turns it round and round again, and at last lifts

it above his head and peaks into it. 'Ha, ha,' says he; 'this won't do; I see one hole here. What mean you by wanting to sell article like this to stranger?' Says the man, 'there be no hole in it.' 'But there is,' says Tom, holding it up and peaking into it again; 'I see the hole quite plain. Take it and look into it yourself.' So the man takes the pot, and having held it up and peaked in, 'as I hope to be saved,' says he, 'I can see no hole.' Says Tom, 'good man, if you put your head in, you will find that there is a hole.' So the man tries to put in his head, but having some difficulty Tom lends him a helping hand by jamming the pot quite down over the man's face, then whisking up the other pots Tom leaves the shop, saying as he goes, 'Friend, I suppose you now see that there is a hole in the pot, otherwise how could you have got your head inside?' "

"Very good," said I; "can you tell us something more about Twm Shone Catti?"

"O yes; can tell you plenty about him. The farmer at Newton, just one mile beyond the bridge at Brecon, had one very fine bull, but

with a very short tail. Says Tom to himself: 'By God's nails and blood I will steal the farmer's bull, and then sell it to him for other bull in open market place.' Then Tom makes one fine tail, just for all the world such a tail as the bull ought to have had, then goes by night to the farmer's stall at Newton, steals away the bull, and then sticks to the bull's short stump the fine bull's tail which he himself had made. The next market day he takes the bull to the market-place at Brecon and calls out: 'Very fine bull this, who will buy my fine bull?' Quoth the farmer who stood nigh at hand, 'That very much like my bull, which thief stole t'other night; I think I can swear to him.' Says Tom, 'What do you mean? This bull is not your bull, but mine.' Says the farmer, 'I could swear that this is my bull but for the tail. The tail of my bull was short, but the tail of this is long. I would fain know whether the tail of this be real tail or not.' 'You would?' says Tom; 'well, so you shall.' Thereupon he whips out big knife and cuts off the bull's tail, some little way above where the

false tail was joined on. 'Ha, ha,' said Tom, as the bull's stump of tail bled, and the bit of tail bled too to which the false tail was stuck, and the bull kicked and bellowed. 'What say you now? Is it a true tail or no?' 'By my faith!' says the farmer, 'I see that the tail is a true tail, and that the bull is not mine. I beg pardon for thinking that he was.' 'Begging pardon,' says Tom, 'is all very well; but will you buy the bull?' 'No,' said the farmer; 'I should be loth to buy a bull with tail cut off close to the rump.' 'Ha,' says Tom; 'who made me cut off the tail but yourself? Did you not force me to do so in order to clear my character? Now as you made me cut off my bull's tail, I will make you buy my bull without his tail.' 'Yes, yes,' cried the mob; 'as he forced you to cut off the tail, do you now force him to buy the bull without the tail.' Says the farmer, 'What do you ask for the bull?' Says Tom: 'I ask for him ten pound.' Says the farmer, 'I will give you eight.' 'No,' says Tom; you shall give me ten, or I will have you up before the justice.' 'That

is right,' cried the mob. 'If he won't pay you ten pound, have him up before the justice.' Thereupon the farmer, becoming frightened, pulled out the ten pounds and gave it for his own bull to Tom Shone Catti, who wished him joy of his bargain. As the farmer was driving the bull away he said to Tom: 'Won't you give me the tail?' 'No,' said Tom; 'I shall keep it against the time I steal another bull with a short tail;' and thereupon he runs off."

"A clever fellow," said I; "though it was rather cruel in him to cut off the poor bull's tail. Now, perhaps, you will tell me how he came to marry the rich lady?"

"O yes; I will tell you. One day as he was wandering about, dressed quite like a gentleman, he heard a cry, and found one very fine lady in the hands of one highwayman, who would have robbed and murdered her. Tom kills the highwayman and conducts the lady home to her house and her husband, for she was a married lady. Out of gratitude to Tom for the service he has done, the gentleman and

lady invite him to stay with them. The gentleman, who is a great gentleman, fond of his bottle and hunting, takes mightily to Tom for his funny sayings, and because Tom's a good hand at a glass when at table, and a good hand at a leap when in field; the lady also takes very much to Tom, because he one domm'd handsome fellow, with plenty of wit and what they call boetry,—for Tom amongst other things was no bad boet, and could treat a lady to pennillion about her face and her ancle, and the tip of her ear. At last Tom goes away upon his wanderings, not, however, before he has got one promise from the lady, that if ever she becomes disengaged she will become his wife. Well, after some time the lady's husband dies and leaves her all his property, so that all of a sudden she finds herself one great independent lady, mistress of the whole of Strath Feen, one fair and pleasant valley far away there over the Eastern hills; by the Towey; on the borders of Shire Car. Tom, as soon as he hears the news of all this, sets off for Strath Feen and asks the lady to perform her word; but the

lady, who finds herself one great and independent lady, and moreover does not quite like the idea of marrying one thief, for she had learnt who Tom was, does hum and hah, and at length begs to be excused, because she has changed her mind. Tom begs and entreats, but quite in vain, till at last she tells him to go away and not trouble her any more. Tom goes away, but does not yet lose hope. He takes up his quarters in one strange little cave, nearly at the top of one wild hill, very much like sugar loaf, which does rise above the Towey, just within Shire Car. I have seen the cave myself which is still called Ystafell Twm Shone Catty. Very queer cave it is, in strange situation; steep rock just above it, Towey river roaring below. There Tom takes up his quarters, and from there he often sallies forth, in hope of having interview with fair lady and making her alter her mind, but she will have nothing to do with him, and at last shuts herself up in her house and will not go out. Well, Tom nearly loses all hope; he, however, determines to make one last effort; so one morning he goes to the house

and stands before the door, entreating with one loud and lamentable voice that the lady will see him once more, because he is come to bid her one eternal farewell, being about to set off for the wars in the kingdom of France. Well, the lady who hears all he says relents one little, and showing herself at the window before which are very strong iron bars she says:—'Here I am! whatever you have to say, say it quickly and go your way.' Says Tom:—'I am come to bid you one eternal farewell, and have but one last slight request to make, which is that you vouchsafe to stretch out of the window your lily-white hand that I may impress one last burning kiss of love on the same.' Well, the lady hesitates one little time; at last, having one woman's heart, she thinks she may grant him this last little request and stretching her hand through the bars she says,—'Well, there's my hand, kiss it once and begone.' Forthwith Tom seizing her wrist with his left hand says,—'I have got you now, and will never let you go till you swear to become my wife.' 'Never,' said the lady, 'will I become the wife of one

thief,' and strives with all her might to pull her hand free, but cannot, for the left hand of Tom is more strong than the right of other man. Thereupon Tom with his right hand draws forth his sword, and with one dreadful shout does exclaim,—'Now will you swear to become my wife, for if you don't, by God's blood and nails, I will this moment smite off your hand with this sword.' Then the lady being very much frightened, and having one sneaking kindness for Tom, who though he looked very fierce looked also very handsome, said,—'Well, well! a promise is a promise; I promised to become your wife, and so I will; I swear I will; by all I hold holy I swear; so let go my hand, which you have almost pulled off, and come in and welcome!' So Tom lets go her hand, and the lady opens her door, and before night they were married, and in less than one month Tom, being now very rich and lord of Ystrad Feen, was made justice of the peace and chairman at quarter session."

"And what kind of justice of the peace did Tom make?"

"Ow, the very best justice of the peace that there ever was. He made the old saying good: you must set one thief to catch one thief. He had not been a justice three year before there was not a thief in Shire Brecon nor in Shire Car, for they also made him justice of Carmarthenshire, and a child might walk through the country quite safe with a purse of gold in its hand. He said that as he himself could not have a finger in the pie, he would take care nobody else should. And yet he was not one bloody justice either; never hanged thief without giving him a chance to reform; but when he found him quite hardened he would say: 'Hang up de rogue!' O Tom was not a very hard man, and had one grateful heart for any old kindness which had been shown him. One day as Tom sat on de bench with other big wigs, Tom the biggest wig of the lot, a man was brought up charged with stealing one bullock. Tom no sooner cast eye on the man than he remembered him quite well. Many years before Tom had stole a pair of oxen, which he wished to get through the town of Brecon, but did not dare to drive them

through, for at that very time there was one warrant out against Tom at Brecon for something he had done. So Tom stands with his oxen on the road, scratching his head and not knowing what to do. At length there comes a man along the road, making towards Brecon, to whom Tom says: 'Honest man, I want these two oxen to be driven to such and such a public-house two miles beyond Brecon; I would drive them myself only I have business to do elsewhere of more importance. Now if you will drive them for me there and wait till I come, which will not be long, I will give you a groat.' Says the man: 'I will drive them there for nothing, for as my way lies past that same public-house I can easily afford to do so.' So Tom leaves the oxen with the man, and by rough and roundabout road makes for the public-house beyond Brecon, where he finds the man waiting with the oxen, who hands them over to him and goes on his way. Now, in the man brought up before him and the other big wigs on the bench for stealing the bullock, Tom does recognize the man who had done him that same

good turn. Well! the evidence was heard against the man, and it soon appeared quite clear that the man did really steal the bullock. Says the other big wigs to Tom: 'The fact has been proved quite clear. What have we now to do but to adshudge at once that the domm'd thief be hung?' But Tom, who remembered that the man had once done him one good turn, had made up his mind to save the man. So says he to the other big wigs: 'My very worthy esteemed friends and coadshutors, I do perfectly agree with you that the fact has been proved clear enough, but with respect to de man, I should be very much grieved should he be hung for this one fact, for I did know him long time ago, and did find him to be one domm'd honest man in one transaction which I had with him. So my wordy and esteemed friends and coadshutors I should esteem it one great favour if you would adshudge that the man should be let off this one time. If, however, you deem it inexpedient to let the man off, then of course the man must be hung, for I shall not presume to set my opinions and judgments against your

opinions and judgments, which are far better than my own.' Then the other big wigs did look very big and solemn, and did shake their heads and did whisper to one another that they were afraid the matter could not be done. At last, however, they did come to the conclusion that as Tom had said that he had known the fellow once to be one domm'd honest man, and as they had a great regard for Tom, who was one domm'd good magistrate and highly respectable gentleman with whom they were going to dine the next day—for Tom I must tell you was in the habit of giving the very best dinners in all Shire Brecon—it might not be incompatible with the performance of their duty to let the man off this one time, seeing as how the poor fellow had probably merely made one slight little mistake. Well: to make the matter short, the man was let off with only a slight reprimand, and left the court. Scarcely, however, had he gone twenty yards when Tom was after him, and tapping him on the shoulder said: 'Honest friend, a word with you!' Then the

man turning round Tom said: 'Do you know me, pray?' 'I think I do, your honour,' said the man. 'I think your honour was one of the big wigs, who were just now so kind as to let me off.' 'I was so,' said Tom; 'and it was well for you that I was the biggest of those big wigs, before whom you stood placed, otherwise to a certainty you would have been hung up on high; but did you ever see me before this affair?' 'No, your honour,' said the man, 'I don't remember ever to have seen your honour before.' Says Tom, 'Don't you remember one long time ago driving a pair of oxen through Brecon for a man who stood scratching his head on the road?' 'O yes,' says the man; 'I do remember that well enough.' 'Well,' said Tom; 'I was that man. I had stolen that pair of oxen, and I dared not drive them through Brecon. You drove them for me; and for doing me that good turn I have this day saved your life. I was thief then, but am now big wig. I am Twm Shone Catti. Now lookee! I have saved your life this one time, but I can never save it again.

Should you ever be brought up before me again, though but for stealing one kid, I will hang you as high as ever Haman was hung. One word more: here are five pieces of gold. Take them: employ them well, and reform as I have done, and perhaps in time you may become one big wig, like myself.' Well: the man took the money, and laid it out to the best advantage, and became at last so highly respectable a character that they made him constable. And now, my gentleman, we are close upon Tregaron."

After descending a hill we came to what looked a small suburb, and presently crossed a bridge over the stream, the waters of which sparkled merrily in the beams of the moon which was now shining bright over some lofty hills to the south-east. Beyond the bridge was a small market-place, on the right-hand side of which stood an ancient-looking church. The place upon the whole put me very much in mind of an Andalusian village overhung by its sierra. "Where is the inn?" said I to my companion.

"Yonder it be;" said he pointing to a large

house at the farther end of the market-place. "Very good inn that—Talbot Arms—where they are always glad to see English gentlemans." Then touching his hat, and politely waving his hand, he turned on one side, and I saw him no more.

CHAPTER XXV.

TREGARON CHURCH.—THE MINISTER.—GOOD MORNING.—TOM SHONE'S DISGUISES.—TOM AND THE LADY.—KLIM AND CATTI.

I EXPERIENCED very good entertainment at the Tregaron Inn, had an excellent supper and a very comfortable bed. I arose at about eight in the morning. The day was dull and misty. After breakfast, according to my usual fashion, I took a stroll to see about. The town, which is very small, stands in a valley, near some wild hills called the Berwyn, like the range to the south of Llangollen. The stream, which runs through it and which falls into the Teivi at a little distance from the town, is called the Brennig, probably because it descends from the Berwyn hills. These southern Berwyns form a very extensive mountain region, extending into Brecon and

Carmarthenshire, and contain within them, as I long subsequently found, some of the wildest solitudes and most romantic scenery in Wales. High up amidst them, at about five miles from Tregaron, is a deep broad lake which constitutes the source of the Towy, a very beautiful stream, which after many turnings and receiving the waters of numerous small streams discharges itself into Carmarthen Bay.

I did not fail to pay a visit to Tregaron church. It is an antique building with a stone tower. The door being open, as the door of a church always should be, I entered, and was kindly shown by the clerk, whom I met in the aisle, all about the sacred edifice. There was not much to be seen. Amongst the monuments was a stone tablet to John Herbert, who died 1690. The clerk told me that the name of the clergyman of Tregaron was Hughes; he said that he was an excellent charitable man, who preached the Gospel, and gave himself great trouble in educating the children of the poor. He certainly seemed to have succeeded in teaching them good manners: as I was leaving the church, I met a

number of little boys belonging to the church school; no sooner did they see me than they drew themselves up in a rank on one side, and as I passed took off their caps and simultaneously shouted, "Good morning!"

And now something with respect to the celebrated hero of Tregaron, Tom Shone Catti, concerning whom I picked up a good deal during my short stay there, and of whom I subsequently read something in printed books.*

According to the tradition of the country, he was the illegitimate son of Sir John Wynn of Gwedir, by one Catharine Jones of Tregaron, and was born at a place called Fynnon Lidiart, close

* Amongst others a kind of novel called "The Adventures of Twm Shon Catty, a Wild Wag of Wales." It possesses considerable literary merit, the language being pure, and many of the descriptions graphic. By far the greater part of it, however, would serve for the life of any young Welsh peasant, quite as well as for that of Twm Shone Catti. Its grand fault is endeavouring to invest Twm Shone with a character of honesty, and to make his exploits appear rather those of a wild young waggish fellow than of a robber. This was committing a great mistake. When people take up the lives of bad characters the more rogueries and villanies they find, the better are they pleased, and they are very much disappointed and consider themselves defrauded by any attempt to apologize for the actions of the heroes. If the thieves should chance to have reformed, the respectable readers wish to hear nothing of their reformation till just at the close of the book, when they are very happy to have done with them for ever.

by Tregaron, towards the conclusion of the sixteenth century. He was baptized by the name of Thomas Jones, but was generally called Tom Shone Catti, that is Tom Jones, son of Catti, or Catharine. His mother, who was a person of some little education, brought him up, and taught him to read and write. His life, till his eighteenth year, was much like that of other peasant boys; he kept crows, drove bullocks, and learned to plough and harrow, but always showed a disposition to roguery and mischief. Between eighteen and nineteen, in order to free himself and his mother from the poverty which they had long endured, he adopted the profession of a thief, and soon became celebrated through the whole of Wales for the cleverness and adroitness which he exercised in his calling; qualities in which he appears to have trusted much more than in strength and daring, though well endowed with both. His disguises were innumerable, and all impenetrable; sometimes he would appear as an ancient crone; sometimes as a begging cripple; sometimes as a broken soldier. Though by no means scrupulous as to what he

stole, he was particularly addicted to horse and cattle stealing, and was no less successful in altering the appearance of animals than his own, as he would frequently sell cattle to the very persons from whom he had stolen them, after they had been subjected to such a metamorphosis, by means of dyes and the scissors, that recognition was quite impossible. Various attempts were made to apprehend him, but all without success; he was never at home to people who particularly wanted him, or if at home he looked anything but the person they came in quest of. Once a strong and resolute man, a farmer, who conceived, and very justly, that Tom had abstracted a bullock from his stall, came to Tregaron well armed in order to seize him. Riding up to the door of Tom's mother, he saw an aged and miserable-looking object, with a beggar's staff and wallet, sitting on a stone bench beside the door. 'Does Tom Shone Catti live here?' said the farmer. 'O yes: he lives here,' replied the beggar. 'Is he at home?' 'O yes, he is at home.' 'Will you hold my horse whilst I go in and speak to him?' 'O yes, I will hold your

horse.' Thereupon the man dismounted, took a brace of pistols out of his holsters, gave the cripple his horse's bridle and likewise his whip, and entered the house boldly. No sooner was he inside than the beggar, or rather Tom Shone Catti, for it was he, jumped on the horse's back, and rode away to the farmer's house which was some ten miles distant, altering his dress and appearance as he rode along, having various articles of disguise in his wallet. Arriving at the house he told the farmer's wife that her husband was in the greatest trouble, and wanted fifty pounds, which she was to send by him, and that he came mounted on her husband's horse, and brought his whip, that she might know he was authorized to receive the money. The wife seeing the horse and the whip delivered the money to Tom without hesitation, who forthwith made the best of his way to London, where he sold the horse, and made himself merry with the price, and with what he got from the farmer's wife, not returning to Wales for several months. Though Tom was known by everybody to be a thief, he

appears to have lived on very good terms with the generality of his neighbours, both rich and poor. The poor he conciliated by being very free of the money which he acquired by theft and robbery, and with the rich he ingratiated himself by humorous jesting, at which he was a proficient, and by being able to sing a good song. At length, being an extremely good-looking young fellow, he induced a wealthy lady to promise to marry him. This lady is represented by some as a widow, and by others as a virgin heiress. After some time, however, she refused to perform her promise and barred her doors against him. Tom retired to a cave on the side of a steep wild hill near the lady's house, to which he frequently repaired, and at last, having induced her to stretch her hand to him through the window bars, under the pretence that he wished to imprint a parting kiss upon it, he won her by seizing her hand and threatening to cut it off unless she performed her promise. Then, as everything at the time at which he lived could be done by means of money, he soon obtained

for himself a general pardon, and likewise a commission as justice of the peace, which he held to the time of his death, to the satisfaction of everybody except thieves and ill-doers, against whom he waged incessant war, and with whom he was admirably qualified to cope, from the knowledge he possessed of their ways and habits, from having passed so many years of his life in the exercise of the thieving trade. In his youth he was much addicted to poetry, and a great many pennillion of his composition, chiefly on his own thievish exploits, are yet recited by the inhabitants of certain districts of the shires of Brecon, Carmarthen, and Cardigan.

Such is the history or rather the outline of the history of Twm Shone Catti. Concerning the actions attributed to him it is necessary to say that the greater part consist of myths which are told of particular individuals of every country, from the Indian Ocean to the Atlantic: for example, the story of cutting off the bull's tail is not only told of him but of the Irish thief Delany, and is to be found in the "Lives of Irish

Rogues and Rapparees;" certain tricks related of him in the printed tale bearing his name are almost identical with various rogueries related in the story-book of Klim the Russian robber,* and the most poetical part of Tom Shone's history, namely, that in which he threatens to cut off the hand of the reluctant bride unless she performs her promise, is, in all probability, an offshoot of the grand myth of 'the severed hand,' which in various ways figures in the stories of most nations, and which is turned to considerable account in the tale of the above-mentioned Russian worthy Klim.

* Skazka O Klimkie. Moscow, 1829.

CHAPTER XXVI.

LLAN DDEWI BREVI.—PELAGIAN HERESY.—HU GADARN.—GOD OF AGRICULTURE.—THE SILVER CUP.—RUDE TABLET.

It was about eleven o'clock in the morning when I started from Tregaron; the sky was still cloudy and heavy. I took the road to Lampeter, distant about eight miles, intending, however, to go much farther ere I stopped for the night. The road lay nearly south-west. I passed by Aber Coed, a homestead near the bottom of a dingle down which runs a brook into the Teivi, which flows here close by the road; then by Aber Carvan, where another brook disembogues. Aber, as perhaps the reader already knows, is a disemboguement, and wherever a place commences with Aber there to a certainty does a river flow into the sea or a brook or

rivulet into a river. I next passed through Nant Derven, and in about three quarters of an hour after leaving Tregaron reached a place of old renown called Llan Ddewi Brefi.

Llan Ddewi Brefi is a small village situated at the entrance of a gorge leading up to some lofty hills which rise to the east and belong to the same mountain range as those near Tregaron. A brook flowing from the hills murmurs through it and at length finds its way into the Teivi—an ancient church stands on a little rising ground just below the hills, multitudes of rooks inhabit its steeple and fill throughout the day the air with their cawing. The place wears a remarkable air of solitude, but presents nothing of gloom and horror, and seems just the kind of spot in which some quiet pensive man, fatigued but not soured by the turmoil of the world, might settle down, enjoy a few innocent pleasures, make his peace with God and then compose himself to his long sleep.

It is not without reason that Llan Ddewi Brefi has been called a place of old renown. In the fifth century, one of the most remarkable

ecclesiastical convocations which the world has ever seen was held in this secluded spot. It was for the purpose of refuting certain doctrines which had for some time past caused much agitation in the Church, and which originated with one Morgan, a native of North Wales, who left his country at an early age and repaired to Italy, where having adopted the appellation of Pelagius, which is a Latin translation of his own name Morgan, which signifies "by the seashore," he soon became noted as a theological writer. It is not necessary to enter into any detailed exposition of his opinions; it will, however, be as well to state that one of the points which he was chiefly anxious to inculcate was that it is possible for a man to lead a life entirely free from sin by obeying the dictates of his own reason without any assistance from the grace of God—a dogma certainly to the last degree delusive and dangerous. When the convocation met there were a great many sermons preached by various learned and eloquent divines, but nothing was produced which was pronounced by the general voice a satisfactory answer to

the doctrines of the heresiarch. At length it was resolved to send for Dewi, a celebrated teacher of theology at Mynyw in Pembrokeshire, who from motives of humility had not appeared in the assembly. Messengers therefore were despatched to Dewi, who after repeated entreaties was induced to repair to the place of meeting, where after three days' labour in a cell he produced a treatise in writing in which the tenets of Morgan were so triumphantly overthrown that the convocation unanimously adopted it and sent it into the world with a testimony of approbation as an antidote to the heresy, and so great was its efficacy that from that moment the doctrines of Morgan fell gradually into disrepute.*

Dewi shortly afterwards became primate of Wales being appointed to the see of Minevai or Mynyw, which from that time was called Ty Ddewi or David's House, a name which it still retains amongst the Cumry, though at present called by the Saxons Saint David's. About five centuries after his death the crown of canonization having been awarded to Dewi, various

* Hanes Crefydd Yn Nghymru.

churches were dedicated to him, amongst which was that now called Llan Ddewi Brefi, which was built above the cell in which the good man composed his celebrated treatise.

If this secluded gorge or valley is connected with a remarkable historical event it is also associated with one of the wildest tales of mythology. Here according to old tradition died one of the humped oxen of the team of Hu Gadarn. Distracted at having lost its comrade, which perished from the dreadful efforts which it made along with the others in drawing the avanc hen or old crocodile from the lake of lakes, it fled away from its master, and wandered about till coming to the glen now called that of Llan Ddewi Brefi it fell down and perished after excessive bellowing, from which noise the place probably derived its name of Brefi, for Bref in Cumric signifies a mighty bellowing or lowing. Horns of enormous size, said to have belonged to this humped ox or bison, were for many ages preserved in the church.

Many will exclaim who was Hu Gadarn?

Hu Gadarn in the Gwlad yr Haf or summer country, a certain region of the East, perhaps the Crimea, which seems to be a modification of Cumria, taught the Cumry the arts of civilized life, to build comfortable houses, to sow grain and reap, to tame the buffalo and the bison, and turn their mighty strength to profitable account, to construct boats with wicker and the skins of animals, to drain pools and morasses, to cut down forests, cultivate the vine and encourage bees, make wine and mead, frame lutes and fifes and play upon them, compose rhymes and verses, fuse minerals and form them into various instruments and weapons, and to move in masses against their enemies, and finally when the summer country became over-populated led an immense multitude of his countrymen across many lands to Britain, a country of forests in which bears, wolves, and bisons wandered, and of morasses and pools full of dreadful efync or crocodiles, a country inhabited only by a few savage Gauls, but which shortly after the arrival of Hu and his people became a smiling region, forests being thinned, bears and wolves hunted

down, efync annihilated, bulls and bisons tamed, corn planted and pleasant cottages erected. After his death he was worshipped as the God of agriculture and war by the Cumry and the Gauls. The Germans paid him divine honours under the name of Heus, from which name the province of Hesse in which there was a mighty temple devoted to him derived its appellation. The Scandinavians worshipped him under the name of Odin and Gautr, the latter word a modification of Cadarn or mighty. The wild Finns feared him as a wizard and honoured him as a musician under the name of Wainoemoinen, and it is very probable that he was the wondrous being whom the Greeks termed Odysses. Till a late period the word Hu amongst the Cumry was frequently used to express God—Gwir Hu, God knows, being a common saying. Many Welsh poets have called the Creator by the name of the creature, amongst others Iolo Goch in his ode to the ploughman :—

The mighty Hu who lives for ever,
Of mead and wine to men the giver,
The emperor of land and sea,
And of all things that living be,

Did hold a plough with his good hand,
Soon as the Deluge left the land,
To show to men both strong and weak,
The haughty-hearted and the meek,
Of all the arts the heaven below
The noblest is to guide the plough.

So much for Hu Gadarn or Hu the Mighty, whose name puts one strangely in mind of the Al Kader Hu or the Almighty He of the Arabians.

I went to see the church. The inside was very rude and plain—a rough table covered with a faded cloth served for an altar—on the right-hand side was a venerable-looking chest.

"What is there in that box?" said I to the old sexton who attended me.

"The treasure of the church, sir," he replied in a feeble quaking voice.

"Dear me!" said I, "what does the treasure consist of?"

"You shall see, sir," said he, and drawing a large key out of his pocket he unlocked the chest and taking out a cup of silver he put it into my hand saying:—"This is the treasure of the church, sir!"

I looked at the cup. It was tolerably large

and of very chaste workmanship. Graven upon it were the following words :—

"Poculum Eclesie De LXXN Dewy Brefy 1574."

"Do you always keep this cup in that chest?" said I.

"Yes, sir! we have kept it there since the cup was given to us by de godly Queen Elizabeth."

I said nothing, but I thought to myself:—"I wonder how long a cup like this would have been safe in a crazy chest in a country church in England."

I kissed the sacred relic of old times with reverence and returned it to the old sexton.

"What became of the horns of Hu Gadarn's bull?" said I after he had locked the cup again in its dilapidated coffer.

"They did dwindle away, sir, till they came to nothing."

"Did you ever see any part of them?" said I.

"O no, sir; I did never see any part of them, but one very old man who is buried here did

tell me shortly before he died that he had seen one very old man who had seen of dem one little tip."

"Who was the old man who said that to you?" said I.

"I will show you his monument, sir," then taking me into a dusky pew he pointed to a small rude tablet against the church wall and said:—"That is his monument, sir."

The tablet bore the following inscription, and below it a rude englyn on death not worth transcribing:—

Coffadwriaeth am
Thomas Jones
Diweddar o'r Draws Llwyn yn y Plwyf hwn:
Bu farw Chwefror 6 fed 1830
Yn 92 oed.
To the Memory of
Thomas Jones
Of Traws Llwyn (across the Grove) in this parish who died
February the sixth, 1830. Aged 92.

After copying the inscription I presented the old man with a trifle and went my way.

CHAPTER XXVII.

LAMPETER.—THE MONK AUSTIN.—THE THREE PUBLICANS.—THE TOMBSTONE.—SUDDEN CHANGE.—TRAMPERS.—A CATHOLIC.—THE BRIDGE OF TWRCH.

THE country between Llan Ddewi and Lampeter presented nothing remarkable, and I met on the road nothing worthy of being recorded. On arriving at Lampeter I took a slight refreshment at the inn, and then went to see the college which stands a little way to the north of the town. It was founded by Bishop Burgess in the year 1820, for the education of youths intended for the ministry of the Church of England. It is a neat quadrate edifice with a courtyard in which stands a large stone basin. From the courtyard you enter a spacious dining-hall, over the door of which hangs a well-executed portrait of the good bishop. From the hall you ascend by a handsome staircase to the

library, a large and lightsome room, well stored with books in various languages. The grand curiosity is a manuscript Codex containing a Latin synopsis of Scripture which once belonged to the monks of Bangor Is Coed. It bears marks of blood with which it was sprinkled when the monks were massacred by the heathen Saxons, at the instigation of Austin the Pope's missionary in Britain. The number of students seldom exceeds forty.

It might be about half-past two in the afternoon when I left Lampeter. I passed over a bridge, taking the road to Llandovery which, however, I had no intention of attempting to reach that night, as it was considerably upwards of twenty miles distant. The road lay, seemingly, due east. After walking very briskly for about an hour I came to a very small hamlet consisting of not more than six or seven houses; of these three seemed to be public-houses, as they bore large flaming signs. Seeing three rather shabby-looking fellows standing chatting with their hands in their pockets, I stopped and inquired in English the name of the place.

"Pen- something," said one of them, who had a red face and a large carbuncle on his nose, which served to distinguish him from his companions, who though they had both very rubicund faces had no carbuncles.

"It seems rather a small place to maintain three public-houses," said I; "how do the publicans manage to live?"

"O, tolerably well, sir; we get bread and cheese and have a groat in our pockets. No great reason to complain; have we, neighbours?"

"No! no great reason to complain," said the other two.

"Dear me!" said I; "are you the publicans?"

"We are, sir," said the man with the carbuncle on his nose, "and shall be each of us glad to treat you to a pint in his own house in order to welcome you to Shire Car—shan't we, neighbours?"

"Yes, in truth we shall," said the other two.

"By Shire Car," said I, "I suppose you mean Shire Cardigan?"

"Shire Cardigan!" said the man; "no indeed; by Shire Car is meant Carmarthenshire. Your honour has left beggarly Cardigan some way behind you. Come, your honour, come and have a pint; this is my house," said he, pointing to one of the buildings.

"But," said I, "I suppose if I drink at your expense you will expect to drink at mine?"

"Why, we can't say that we shall have any objection, your honour; I think we will arrange the matter in this way: we will go into my house, where we will each of us treat your honour with a pint, and for each pint we treat your honour with your honour shall treat us with one."

"Do you mean each?" said I.

"Why, yes! your honour, for a pint amongst three would be rather a short allowance."

"Then it would come to this," said I, "I should receive three pints from you three, and you three would receive nine from me."

"Just so, your honour, I see your honour is a ready reckoner."

"I know how much three times three make," said I. "Well, thank you, kindly, but I must decline your offer; I am bound on a journey."

"Where are you bound to, master?"

"To Llandovery, but if I can find an inn a few miles farther on I shall stop there for the night."

"Then you will put up at the 'Pump Saint,' master; well, you can have your three pints here and your three pipes too, and yet get easily there by seven. Come in, master, come in! If you take my advice you will think of your pint and your pipe and let all the rest go to the devil."

"Thank you," said I, "but I can't accept your invitation, I must be off;" and in spite of yet more pressing solicitations I went on.

I had not gone far when I came to a point where the road parted into two; just at the point were a house and premises belonging apparently to a stonemason, as a great many pieces of half-cut granite were standing about, and not a few tomb-stones. I stopped, and looked at one of the latter. It was to the

memory of somebody who died at the age of sixty-six, and at the bottom bore the following bit of poetry :—

"Ti ddaear o ddaear ystyria mewn braw,
Mai daear i ddaear yn fuan a ddaw ;
A ddaear mewn ddaear raid aros bob darn
Nes daear o ddaear gyfrodir i farn."

"Thou earth from earth reflect with anxious mind
That earth to earth must quickly be consigned,
And earth in earth must lie entranced enthralled
Till earth from earth to judgment shall be called."

"What conflicting opinions there are in this world," said I, after I had copied the quatrain and translated it. "The publican yonder tells me to think of my pint and pipe and let everything else go to the devil, and the tombstone here tells me to reflect with dread—a much finer expression by the bye than reflect with anxious mind, as I have got it—that in a very little time I must die, and lie in the ground till I am called to judgment. Now, which is most right, the tombstone or the publican? Why, I should say the tombstone decidedly. The publican is too sweeping when he tells you to think of your pint and pipe and nothing else. A pint and pipe are good things. I don't smoke myself,

but I dare say a pipe is a good thing for them who like it, but there are certainly things worth being thought of in this world besides a pint and pipe—hills and dales, woods and rivers, for example—death and judgment too are worthy now and then of very serious thought. So it won't do to go with the publican the whole hog. But with respect to the tombstone, it is quite safe and right to go with it its whole length. It tells you to think of death and judgment—and assuredly we ought to think of them. It does not, however, tell you to think of nothing but death and judgment and to eschew every innocent pleasure within your reach. If it did it would be a tombstone quite as sweeping in what it says as the publican, who tells you to think of your pint and pipe and let everything else go to the devil. The wisest course evidently is to blend the whole of the philosophy of the tombstone with a portion of the philosophy of the publican and something more, to enjoy one's pint and pipe and other innocent pleasures, and to think every now and then of death and judgment—that is what I

intend to do, and indeed is what I have done for the last thirty years."

I went on—desolate hills rose in the east, the way I was going, but on the south were beautiful hillocks adorned with trees and hedge-rows. I was soon amongst the desolate hills, which then looked more desolate than they did at a distance. They were of a wretched russet colour, and exhibited no other signs of life and cultivation than here and there a miserable field and vile-looking hovel; and if there was here nothing to cheer the eye there was also nothing to cheer the ear. There were no songs of birds, no voices of rills; the only sound I heard was the lowing of a wretched bullock from a far-off slope.

I went on slowly and heavily; at length I got to the top of this wretched range—then what a sudden change! Beautiful hills in the far east, a fair valley below me, and groves and woods on each side of the road which led down to it. The sight filled my veins with fresh life, and I descended this side of the hill as merrily as I had come up the other side despondingly. About half-way down the hill I came to a small

village. Seeing a public-house I went up to it, and inquired in English of some people within the name of the village.

"Dolwen," said a dark-faced young fellow of about four-and-twenty.

"And what is the name of the valley?" said I.

"Dolwen," was the answer, "the valley is named after the village."

"You mean that the village is named after the valley," said I, "for Dolwen means fair valley."

"It may be so," said the young fellow, "we don't know much here."

Then after a moment's pause he said:

"Are you going much farther?"

"Only as far as the 'Pump Saint.'"

"Have you any business there?" said he.

"No," I replied, "I am travelling the country, and shall only put up there for the night."

"You had better stay here," said the young fellow. "You will be better accommodated here than at the 'Pump Saint.'"

"Very likely," said I; "but I have resolved

to go there, and when I once make a resolution I never alter it."

Then bidding him good evening I departed. Had I formed no resolution at all about stopping at the "Pump Saint" I certainly should not have stayed in this house, which had all the appearance of a tramper's hostelry, and though I am very fond of the conversation of trampers, who are the only people from whom you can learn anything, I would much rather have the benefit of it abroad than in their own lairs. A little farther down I met a woman coming up the ascent. She was tolerably respectably dressed, seemed about five-and-thirty, and was rather good-looking. She walked somewhat slowly, which was probably more owing to a large bundle which she bore in her hand than to her path being up-hill.

"Good evening," said I, stopping.

"Good evening, your honour," said she, stopping and slightly panting.

"Do you come from far?" said I.

"Not very far, your honour, but quite far enough for a poor feeble woman."

"Are you Welsh?" said I.

"Och no! your honour; I am Mary Bane from Dunmanway in the kingdom of Ireland."

"And what are you doing here?" said I.

"Och sure! I am travelling the country with soft goods."

"Are you going far?" said I.

"Merely to the village a little farther up, your honour."

"I am going farther," said I, "I am thinking of passing the night at the 'Pump Saint.'"

"Well, then, I would just advise your honour to do no such thing, but to turn back with me to the village above, where there is an illigant inn where your honour will be well accommodated."

"O, I saw that as I came past," said I; "I don't think there is much accommodation there."

"O, your honour is clane mistaken; there is always an illigant fire and an illigant bed too."

"Is there only one bed?" said I.

"O yes, there are two beds, one for the accommodation of the people of the house and the other for that of the visitors."

"And do the visitors sleep together then?" said I.

"O yes! unless they wish to be unsociable. Those who are not disposed to be sociable sleeps in the chimney-corners."

"Ah," said I, "I see it is a very agreeable inn; however, I shall go on to the 'Pump Saint.'"

"I am sorry for it, your honour, for your honour's sake; your honour won't be half so illigantly served at the 'Pump Saint' as there above."

"Of what religion are you?" said I.

"O, I'm a Catholic, just like your honour, for if I am not clane mistaken your honour is an Irishman."

"Who is your spiritual director?" said I.

"Why, then, it is jist Father Toban, your honour, whom of course your honour knows."

"O yes!" said I; "when you next see him present my respects to him."

"What name shall I mention, your honour?"

"Shorsha Borroo," said I.

"Oh, then I was right in taking your honour

for an Irishman. None but a raal Paddy bears that name. A credit to your honour is your name, for it is a famous name,* and a credit to your name is your honour, for it is a neat man without a bend you are. God bless your honour and good night! and may you find dacent quarters in the 'Pump Saint.'"

Leaving Mary Bane I proceeded on my way. The evening was rather fine but twilight was coming rapidly on. I reached the bottom of the valley and soon overtook a young man dressed something like a groom. We entered into conversation. He spoke Welsh and a little English. His Welsh I had great difficulty in understanding, as it was widely different from that which I had been accustomed to. He asked me where I was going to; I replied to the "Pump Saint," and then inquired if he was in service.

"I am," said he.

"With whom do you live?" said I.

"With Mr. Johnes of Dol Cothi," he answered.

* The good gentlewoman was probably thinking of the celebrated king Brian Boromhe slain at the battle of Clontarf.

Struck by the word Cothi, I asked if Dol Cothi was ever called Glyn Cothi.

"O yes," said he, "frequently."

"How odd," thought I to myself, "that I should have stumbled all of a sudden upon the country of my old friend Lewis Glyn Cothi, the greatest poet after Ab Gwilym of all Wales!"

"Is Cothi a river?" said I to my companion.

"It is," said he.

Presently we came to a bridge over a small river.

"Is this river the Cothi?" said I.

"No," said he, "this is the Twrch; the bridge is called Pont y Twrch."

"The bridge of Twrch or the hog," said I to myself; "there is a bridge of the same name in the Scottish Highlands, not far from the pass of the Trossachs. I wonder whether it has its name from the same cause as this, namely, from passing over a river called the Twrch or Torck, which word in Gaelic signifies boar or hog even as it does in Welsh." It had now become nearly dark. After proceeding some way farther I

asked the groom if we were far from the inn of the "Pump Saint."

"Close by," said he, and presently pointing to a large building on the right-hand side he said: "This is the inn of the 'Pump Saint,' sir. Nos Da'chi!"

CHAPTER XXVIII.

PUMP SAINT.—PLEASANT RESIDENCE.—THE WATERY COOM.—PHILOLOGICAL FACT.—EVENING SERVICE.—MEDITATION.

I ENTERED the inn of the "Pump Saint." It was a comfortable old-fashioned place, with a very large kitchen and a rather small parlour. The people were kind and attentive, and soon set before me in the parlour a homely but savoury supper, and a foaming tankard of ale. After supper I went into the kitchen, and sitting down with the good folks in an immense chimney-corner, listened to them talking in their Carmarthenshire dialect till it was time to go to rest, when I was conducted to a large chamber where I found an excellent and clean bed awaiting me, in which I enjoyed a refreshing sleep occasionally visited by dreams in which some of the scenes

of the preceding day again appeared before me, but in an indistinct and misty manner.

Awaking in the very depth of the night I thought I heard the murmuring of a river; I listened and soon found that I had not been deceived. "I wonder whether that river is the Cothi," said I, "the stream of the immortal Lewis. I will suppose that it is"—and rendered quite happy by the idea, I soon fell asleep again.

I arose about eight and went out to look about me. The village consists of little more than half-a-dozen houses. The name "Pump Saint" signifies "Five Saints." Why the place is called so I know not. Perhaps the name originally belonged to some chapel which stood either where the village now stands or in the neighbourhood. The inn is a good specimen of an ancient Welsh hostelry. Its gable is to the road and its front to a little space on one side of the way. At a little distance up the road is a blacksmith's shop. The country around is interesting: on the north-west is a fine wooded hill—to the south a valley through which flows the Cothi, a fair river, the one whose murmur

had come so pleasingly upon my ear in the depth of night.

After breakfast I departed for Llandovery. Presently I came to a lodge on the left-hand beside an ornamental gate at the bottom of an avenue leading seemingly to a gentleman's seat. On inquiring of a woman who sat at the door of the lodge to whom the grounds belonged she said to Mr. Johnes, and that if I pleased I was welcome to see them. I went in and advanced along the avenue, which consisted of very noble oaks; on the right was a vale in which a beautiful brook was running north and south. Beyond the vale to the east were fine wooded hills. I thought I had never seen a more pleasing locality, though I saw it to great disadvantage, the day being dull, and the season the latter fall. Presently, on the avenue making a slight turn, I saw the house, a plain but comfortable gentleman's seat with wings. It looked to the south down the dale. "With what satisfaction I could live in that house," said I to myself, "if backed by a couple of thousands a-year. With what gravity could I sign a warrant in its

library, and with what dreamy comfort translate an ode of Lewis Glyn Cothi, my tankard of rich ale beside me. I wonder whether the proprietor is fond of the old bard and keeps good ale. Were I an Irishman instead of a Norfolk man I would go in and ask him."

Returning to the road I proceeded on my journey. I passed over Pont y Rhanedd or the bridge of the Rhanedd, a small river flowing through a dale, then by Clas Hywel, a lofty mountain which appeared to have three heads. After walking for some miles I came to where the road divided into two. By a sign-post I saw that both led to Llandovery, one by Porth y Rhyd and the other by Llanwrda. The distance by the first was six miles and a half, by the latter eight and a half. Feeling quite the reverse of tired I chose the longest road, namely the one by Llanwrda, along which I sped at a great rate.

In a little time I found myself in the heart of a romantic winding dell overhung with trees of various kinds, which a tall man whom I met told me was called Cwm Dwr Llanwrda, or the

Watery Coom of Llanwrda; and well might it be called the Watery Coom, for there were several bridges in it, two within a few hundred yards of each other. The same man told me that the war was going on very badly, that our soldiers were suffering much, and that the snow was two feet deep at Sebastopol.

Passing through Llanwrda, a pretty village with a singular-looking church, close to which stood an enormous yew, I entered a valley which I learned was the valley of the Towey. I directed my course to the north, having the river on my right, which runs towards the south in a spacious bed which, however, except in times of flood, it scarcely half fills. Beautiful hills were on either side, partly cultivated partly covered with wood, and here and there dotted with farm-houses and gentlemen's seats; green pastures which descended nearly to the river occupying in general the lower parts. After journeying about four miles amid this kind of scenery I came to a noble suspension bridge, and crossing it found myself in about a quarter of an hour at Llandovery.

It was about half-past two when I arrived. I put up at the Castle Inn and forthwith ordered dinner, which was served up between four and five. During dinner I was waited upon by a strange old fellow who spoke Welsh and English with equal fluency.

"What countryman are you?" said I.

"An Englishman," he replied.

"From what part of England?"

"From Herefordshire."

"Have you been long here?"

"O yes! upwards of twenty years."

"How came you to learn Welsh?"

"O, I took to it and soon picked it up."

"Can you read it?" said I.

"No, I can't."

"Can you read English?"

"Yes, I can; that is, a little."

"Why didn't you try to learn to read Welsh?"

"Well, I did; but I could make no hand of it. It's one thing to speak Welsh and another to read it."

"I can read Welsh much better than I can speak it," said I.

"Ah, you are a gentleman—gentlefolks always find it easier to learn to read a foreign lingo than to speak it, but it's quite the contrary with we poor folks."

"One of the most profound truths ever uttered connected with language," said I to myself. I asked him if there were many Church of England people in Llandovery.

"A good many," he replied.

"Do you belong to the Church?" said I.

"Yes, I do."

"If this were Sunday I would go to church," said I.

"O, if you wish to go to church you can go to-night. This is Wednesday, and there will be service at half-past six. If you like I will come for you."

"Pray do," said I; "I should like above all things to go."

Dinner over I sat before the fire occasionally dozing, occasionally sipping a glass of whisky-and-water. A little after six the old fellow made his appearance with a kind of Spanish hat on his head. We set out, the night was

very dark; we went down a long street seemingly in the direction of the west. "How many churches are there in Llandovery?" said I to my companion.

"Only one, but you are not going to Llandovery Church but to that of Llanfair, in which our clergyman does duty once or twice a week."

"Is it far?" said I.

"O no; just out of the town, only a few steps farther."

We seemed to pass over a bridge and began to ascend a rising ground. Several people were going in the same direction.

"There," said the old man, "follow with these, and a little farther up you will come to the church, which stands on the right-hand."

He then left me. I went with the rest and soon came to the church. I went in and was at once conducted by an old man who I believe was the sexton to a large pew close against the southern wall. The inside of the church was dimly lighted; it was long and narrow, and the walls were painted with a yellow colour. The

pulpit stood against the northern wall near the altar, and almost opposite to the pew in which I sat. After a little time the service commenced; it was in Welsh. When the litanies were concluded the clergyman, who appeared to be a middle-aged man, and who had rather a fine voice, began to preach. His sermon was from the 119th Psalm: "Am hynny hoffais dy gorchymynion yn mwy nag aur:" "Therefore have I loved thy commandments more than gold." The sermon which was extempore was delivered with great earnestness, and I make no doubt was a very excellent one, but owing to its being in South Welsh I did not derive so much benefit from it as I otherwise might have done. When it was over a great many got up and went away. Observing, however, that not a few remained, I determined upon remaining too. When everything was quiet the clergyman descending from the pulpit repaired to the vestry, and having taken off his gown went into a pew, and standing up began a discourse, from which I learned that there was to be a sacrament on

the ensuing Sabbath. He spoke with much fervency, enlarging upon the high importance of the holy communion and exhorting people to come to it in a fit state of mind. When he had finished a man in a neighbouring pew got up and spoke about his own unworthiness, saying this and that about himself, his sins of commission and omission, and dwelling particularly on his uncharitableness and the malicious pleasure which he took in the misfortunes of his neighbours. The clergyman listened attentively, sometimes saying "Ah!" and the congregation also listened attentively, a voice here and there frequently saying "Ah." When the man had concluded the clergyman again spoke, making observations on what he had heard and hoping that the rest would be visited with the same contrite spirit as their friend. Then there was a hymn and we went away.

The moon was shining on high and cast its silvery light on the tower, the church, some fine trees which surrounded it and the congregation going home; a few of the better dressed were

talking to each other in English, but with an accent and pronunciation which rendered the discourse almost unintelligible to my ears.

I found my way back to my inn and went to bed after musing awhile on the concluding scene of which I had been witness in the church.

CHAPTER XXIX.

LLANDOVERY.—GRIFFITH AP NICHOLAS.—POWERFUL ENEMIES.—LAST WORDS. — LLANDOVERY CHURCH.— REES PRITCHARD. — THE WISER CREATURE. — GOD'S BETTER THAN ALL. — THE OLD VICARAGE.

THE morning of the ninth was very beautiful, with a slight tendency to frost. I breakfasted, and having no intention of proceeding on my journey that day, I went to take a leisurely view of Llandovery and the neighbourhood.

Llandovery is a small but beautiful town, situated amidst fertile meadows. It is a water-girdled spot, whence its name Llandovery or Llanymdyfri, which signifies the church surrounded by water. On its west is the Towey, and on its east the river Bran or Brein, which descending from certain lofty mountains to the north-east runs into the Towey a little way below the town. The most striking object

which Llandovery can show is its castle, from which the inn, which stands near to it, has its name. This castle, majestic though in ruins, stands on a green mound, the eastern side of which is washed by the Bran. Little with respect to its history is known. One thing, however, is certain, namely that it was one of the many strongholds, which at one time belonged to Griffith ap Nicholas, Lord of Dinevor, one of the most remarkable men which South Wales has ever produced, of whom a brief account here will not be out of place.

Griffith ap Nicholas flourished towards the concluding part of the reign of Henry the Sixth. He was a powerful chieftain of South Wales and possessed immense estates in the counties of Carmarthen and Cardigan. King Henry the Sixth, fully aware of his importance in his own country, bestowed upon him the commission of the peace, an honour at that time seldom vouchsafed to a Welshman, and the captaincy of Kilgarran, a strong royal castle situated on the southern bank of the Teivi a few miles above Cardigan. He had many castles of his

own, in which he occasionally resided, but his chief residence was Dinevor, half way between Llandovery and Carmarthen, once a palace of the kings of South Wales, from whom Griffith traced lineal descent. He was a man very proud at heart, but with too much wisdom to exhibit many marks of pride, speaking generally with the utmost gentleness and suavity, and though very brave never addicted to dashing into danger for the mere sake of displaying his valour. He was a great master of the English tongue, and well acquainted with what learning it contained, but nevertheless was passionately attached to the language and literature of Wales, a proof of which he gave by holding a congress of bards and literati at Carmarthen, at which various pieces of eloquence and poetry were recited, and certain alterations introduced into the canons of Welsh versification. Though holding offices of trust and emolument under the Saxon, he in the depths of his soul detested the race and would have rejoiced to see it utterly extirpated from Britain. This hatred of his against the English was the cause

of his doing that which cannot be justified on any principle of honour, giving shelter and encouragement to Welsh thieves who were in the habit of plundering and ravaging the English borders. Though at the head of a numerous and warlike clan which was strongly attached to him on various accounts, Griffith did not exactly occupy a bed of roses. He had amongst his neighbours four powerful enemies who envied him his large possessions, with whom he had continual disputes about property and privilege. Powerful enemies they may well be called, as they were no less personages than Humphrey Duke of Buckingham, Richard Duke of York, who began the contest for the crown with King Henry the Sixth, Jasper Earl of Pembroke, son of Owen Tudor, and half-brother of the king, and the Earl of Warwick. These accused him at court of being a comforter and harbourer of thieves, the result being that he was deprived not only of the commission of the peace but of the captaincy of Kilgarran which the Earl of Pembroke, through his influence with his half-brother, procured for himself. They

moreover induced William Borley and Thomas Corbet, two justices of the peace for the county of Hereford, to grant a warrant for his apprehension on the ground of his being in league with the thieves of the Marches. Griffith in the bosom of his mighty clan bade defiance to Saxon warrants, though once having ventured to Hereford he nearly fell into the power of the ministers of justice, only escaping by the intervention of Sir John Scudamore, with whom he was connected by marriage. Shortly afterwards the civil war breaking out the Duke of York apologized to Griffith and besought his assistance against the king, which the chieftain readily enough promised, not out of affection for York but from the hatred which he felt, on account of the Kilgarran affair, for the Earl of Pembroke, who had sided, very naturally, with his half-brother the king and commanded his forces in the west. Griffith fell at the great battle of Mortimer's cross, which was won for York by a desperate charge made right at Pembroke's banner by Griffith and his Welshmen when the rest of the Yorkists were wavering. His last

words were "Welcome, Death! since honour and victory make for us."

The power and wealth of Griffith ap Nicholas and also parts of his character have been well described by one of his bards, Gwilym ab Ieuan Hen, in an ode to the following effect:—

"Griffith ap Nicholas, who like thee
For wealth and power and majesty!
Which most abound, I cannot say,
On either side of Towey gay,
From hence to where it meets the brine,
Trees or stately towers of thine?
The chair of judgment thou didst gain,
But not to deal in judgments vain—
To thee upon thy judgment chair
From near and far do crowds repair;
But though betwixt the weak and strong
No questions rose of right and wrong,
The strong and weak to thee would hie;
The strong to do thee injury,
And to the weak thou wine wouldst deal,
And wouldst trip up the mighty heel.
A lion unto the lofty thou,
A lamb unto the weak and low.
Much thou resemblest Nudd of yore,
Surpassing all who went before;
Like him thou'rt fam'd for bravery,
For noble birth and high degree.
Hail, captain of Kilgarran's hold!
Lieutenant of Carmarthen old!
Hail chieftain, Cambria's choicest boast!
Hail Justice at the Saxon's cost!
Seven castles high confess thy sway,
Seven palaces thy hands obey.

Against my chief, with envy fired,
Three dukes and judges two conspired,
But thou a dauntless front didst show,
And to retreat they were not slow.
O, with what gratitude is heard
From mouth of thine the whispered word;
The deepest pools in rivers found
In summer are of softest sound;
The sage concealeth what he knows,
A deal of talk no wisdom shows;
The sage is silent as the grave,
Whilst of his lips the fool is slave;
Thy smile doth every joy impart,
Of faith a fountain is thy heart;
Thy hand is strong, thine eye is keen,
Thy head o'er every head is seen."

The church of Llandovery is a large edifice standing at the southern extremity of the town in the vicinity of the Towey. The outside exhibits many appearances of antiquity but the interior has been sadly modernized. It contains no remarkable tombs; I was pleased, however, to observe upon one or two of the monuments the name of Ryce, the appellation of the great clan to which Griffith ap Nicholas belonged; of old the regal race of South Wales. On inquiring of the clerk, an intelligent young man who showed me over the sacred edifice, as to the state of the Church of England at Llandovery, he gave me a very cheering account, adding,

however, that before the arrival of the present incumbent it was very low indeed. "What is the clergyman's name?" said I; "I heard him preach last night."

"I know you did, sir," said the clerk bowing, "for I saw you at the service at Llanfair—his name is Hughes."

"Any relation of the clergyman at Tregaron?" said I.

"Own brother, sir."

"He at Tregaron bears a very high character," said I.

"And very deservedly, sir," said the clerk, "for he is an excellent man; he is, however, not more worthy of his high character than his brother here is of the one which he bears, which is equally high, and which the very dissenters have nothing to say against."

"Have you ever heard," said I, "of a man of the name of Rees Pritchard, who preached within these walls some two hundred years ago?" "Rees Pritchard, sir! Of course I have—who hasn't heard of the old vicar—the Welshman's candle? Ah, he was a man indeed! we have

some good men in the church, very good; but the old vicar—where shall we find his equal?"

"Is he buried in this church?" said I. "No, sir, he was buried out abroad in the churchyard, near the wall by the Towey."

"Can you show me his tomb?" said I. "No sir, nor can any one; his tomb was swept away more than a hundred years ago by a dreadful inundation of the river, which swept away not only tombs but dead bodies out of graves. But there's his house in the market-place, the old vicarage, which you should go and see. I would go and show it you myself but I have church matters just now to attend to—the place of church clerk at Llandovery, long a sinecure, is anything but that under the present clergyman, who though not a Rees Pritchard is a very zealous Christian, and not unworthy to preach in the pulpit of the old vicar."

Leaving the church I went to see the old vicarage, but before saying anything respecting it a few words about the old vicar.

Rees Pritchard was born at Llandovery, about the year 1575, of respectable parents. He

received the rudiments of a classical education at the school of the place, and at the age of eighteen was sent to Oxford, being intended for the clerical profession. At Oxford he did not distinguish himself in an advantageous manner, being more remarkable for dissipation and riot than application in the pursuit of learning. Returning to Wales he was admitted into the ministry, and after the lapse of a few years was appointed vicar of Llandovery. His conduct for a considerable time was not only unbecoming a clergyman but a human being in any sphere. Drunkenness was very prevalent in the age in which he lived, but Rees Pritchard was so inordinately addicted to that vice that the very worst of his parishioners were scandalized and said:—"Bad as we may be we are not half so bad as the parson."

He was in the habit of spending the greater part of his time in the public-house, from which he was generally trundled home in a wheel-barrow in a state of utter insensibility. God, however, who is aware of what every man is capable of, had reserved Rees Pritchard for great

and noble things, and brought about his conversion in a very remarkable manner.

The people of the tavern which Rees Pritchard frequented had a large he-goat, which went in and out and mingled with the guests. One day Rees in the midst of his orgies called the goat to him and offered it some ale; the creature, far from refusing it, drank greedily, and soon becoming intoxicated fell down upon the floor, where it lay quivering, to the great delight of Rees Pritchard, who made its drunkenness a subject of jest to his boon companions, who, however, said nothing, being struck with horror at such conduct in a person who was placed among them to be a pattern and example. Before night, however, Pritchard became himself intoxicated, and was trundled to the vicarage in the usual manner. During the whole of the next day he was very ill and kept at home, but on the following one he again repaired to the public-house, sat down and called for his pipe and tankard. The goat was now perfectly recovered and was standing nigh. No sooner was the tankard brought than Rees taking hold

of it held it to the goat's mouth. The creature, however, turned away its head in disgust and hurried out of the room. This circumstance produced an instantaneous effect upon Rees Pritchard :—"My God!" said he to himself, "is this poor dumb creature wiser than I? Yes, surely; it has been drunk, but having once experienced the wretched consequences of drunkenness, it refuses to be drunk again. How different is its conduct to mine! I, after having experienced a hundred times the filthiness and misery of drunkenness, have still persisted in debasing myself below the condition of a beast. O, if I persist in this conduct what have I to expect but wretchedness and contempt in this world and eternal perdition in the next? But thank God it is not yet too late to amend; I am still alive—I will become a new man—the goat has taught me a lesson." Smashing his pipe he left his tankard untasted on the table, went home, and became an altered man.

Different as an angel of light is from the fiend of the pit was Rees Pritchard from that moment from what he had been in former

days. For upwards of thirty years he preached the Gospel as it had never been preached before in the Welsh tongue since the time of Saint Paul, supposing the beautiful legend to be true which tells us that Saint Paul in his wanderings found his way to Britain and preached to the inhabitants the inestimable efficacy of Christ's bloodshedding in the fairest Welsh, having like all the other apostles the miraculous gift of tongues. The good vicar did more. In the short intervals of relaxation which he allowed himself from the labour of the ministry during those years he composed a number of poetical pieces which after his death were gathered together into a volume and published, under the title of "Canwyll y Cymry; or, the Candle of the Welshman." This work, which has gone through almost countless editions, is written in two common easy measures, and the language is so plain and simple that it is intelligible to the homeliest hind who speaks the Welsh language. All of the pieces are of a strictly devotional character, with the exception of one, namely a welcome to Charles, Prince of Wales, on his

return from Spain, to which country he had gone to see the Spanish ladye whom at one time he sought as bride. Some of the pieces are highly curious, as they bear upon events at present forgotten; for example, the song upon the year 1629, when the corn was blighted throughout the land, and "A Warning to the Cumry to repent when the Plague of Blotches and Boils was prevalent in London." Some of the pieces are written with astonishing vigour, for example "The Song of the Husbandman," and "God's Better than All," of which last piece the following is a literal translation.

GOD'S BETTER THAN ALL.

God's better than heaven or aught therein,
Than the earth or aught we there can win,
Better than the world or its wealth to me—
God's better than all that is or can be.

Better than father, than mother, than nurse,
Better than riches, oft proving a curse,
Better than Martha or Mary even—
Better by far is the God of heaven.

If God for thy portion thou hast ta'en
There's Christ to support thee in every pain,
The world to respect thee thou wilt gain,
To fear thee the fiend and all his train.

Of the best of portions thou choice didst make
When thou the high God to thyself didst take,
A portion which none from thy grasp can rend
Whilst the sun and the moon on their course shall wend.

When the sun grows dark and the moon turns red,
When the stars shall drop and millions dread,
When the earth shall vanish with its pomps in fire,
Thy portion still shall remain entire.

Then let not thy heart though distressed, complain!
A hold on thy portion firm maintain.
Thou didst choose the best portion, again I say—
Resign it not till thy dying day.

The old vicarage of Llandovery is a very large mansion of dark red brick, fronting the principal street or market-place, and with its back to a green meadow bounded by the river Bran. It is in a very dilapidated condition, and is inhabited at present by various poor families. The principal room, which is said to have been the old vicar's library, and the place where he composed his undying Candle, is in many respects a remarkable apartment. It is of large dimensions. The roof is curiously inlaid with stucco or mortar, and is traversed from east to west by an immense black beam. The fire-place, which is at the south, is very large and seemingly of high antiquity. The windows, which are two in number and look westward into the street, have a quaint and singular appearance. Of all the houses in

Llandovery the old vicarage is by far the most worthy of attention, irrespective of the wonderful monument of God's providence and grace who once inhabited it.

The reverence in which the memory of Rees Pritchard is still held in Llandovery the following anecdote will show. As I was standing in the principal street staring intently at the antique vicarage, a respectable-looking farmer came up and was about to pass, but observing how I was employed he stopped, and looked now at me and now at the antique house. Presently he said:—

"A fine old place, is it not, sir? but do you know who lived there?"

Wishing to know what the man would say provided he thought I was ignorant as to the ancient inmate, I turned a face of inquiry upon him; whereupon he advanced towards me two or three steps, and placing his face so close to mine that his nose nearly touched my cheek he said in a kind of piercing whisper—

"The Vicar."

Then drawing his face back he looked me full

in the eyes as if to observe the effect of his intelligence, gave me two nods as if to say, "He did, indeed," and departed.

The Vicar of Llandovery had then been dead nearly two hundred years. Truly the man in whom piety and genius are blended is immortal upon earth.

CHAPTER XXX.

DEPARTURE FROM LLANDOVERY.—A BITTER METHODIST.—NORTH AND SOUTH.—THE CARAVAN.—CAPTAIN BOSVILE.—DEPUTY RANGER.—A SCRIMMAGE.—THE HEAVENLY GWYNFA.—DANGEROUS POSITION.

On the tenth I departed from Llandovery, which I have no hesitation in saying is about the pleasantest little town in which I have halted in the course of my wanderings. I intended to sleep at Gutter Vawr a place some twenty miles distant, just within Glamorganshire, to reach which it would be necessary to pass over part of a range of wild hills, generally called the Black Mountains. I started at about ten o'clock; the morning was lowering, and there were occasional showers of rain and hail. I passed by Rees Pritchard's church, holding my hat in my hand as I did so, not out of respect for the building, but from reverence for the

memory of the sainted man who of old from its pulpit called sinners to repentance, and whose remains slumber in the churchyard unless washed away by some frantic burst of the neighbouring Towy. Crossing a bridge over the Bran just before it enters the greater stream, I proceeded along a road running nearly south and having a range of fine hills on the east. Presently violent gusts of wind came on, which tore the sear leaves by thousands from the trees of which there were plenty by the roadsides. After a little time, however, this elemental hurly-burly passed away, a rainbow made its appearance and the day became comparatively fine. Turning to the south-east under a hill covered with oaks, I left the vale of the Towy behind me, and soon caught a glimpse of some very lofty hills which I supposed to be the Black Mountains. It was a mere glimpse, for scarcely had I descried them when mist settled down and totally obscured them from my view.

In about an hour I reached Llangadog, a large village. The name signifies the Church of Gadog. Gadog was a British saint of the fifth

century, who after labouring amongst his own countrymen for their spiritual good for many years, crossed the sea to Brittany, where he died. Scarcely had I entered Llangadog when a great shower of rain came down. Seeing an ancient-looking hostelry I at once made for it. In a large and comfortable kitchen I found a middle-aged woman seated by a huge deal table near a blazing fire, with a couple of large books open before her. Sitting down on a chair I told her in English to bring me a pint of ale. She did so and again sat down to her books, which on inquiry I found to be a Welsh Bible and Concordance. We soon got into discourse about religion, but did not exactly agree, for she was a bitter Methodist, as bitter as her beer, only half of which I could get down.

Leaving Llangadog I pushed forward. The day was now tolerably fine. In two or three hours I came to a glen, the sides of which were beautifully wooded. On my left was a river, which came roaring down from a range of lofty mountains right before me to the south-east. The river, as I was told by a lad, was the Sawdde

or Southey, the lofty range the Black Mountains. Passed a pretty village on my right standing something in the shape of a semicircle, and in about half-an-hour came to a bridge over a river which I supposed to be the Sawdde which I had already seen, but which I subsequently learned was an altogether different stream. It was running from the south, a wild fierce flood amidst rocks and stones, the waves all roaring and foaming.

After some time I reached another bridge near the foot of a very lofty ascent. On my left to the east upon a bank was a small house on one side of which was a wheel turned round by a flush of water running in a little artificial canal; close by it were two small cascades, the waters of which and also those of the canal passed under the bridge in the direction of the west. Seeing a decent-looking man engaged in sawing a piece of wood by the roadside I asked him in Welsh whether the house with the wheel was a flour-mill.

"Nage," said he, "it is a pandy, fulling mill."

"Can you tell me the name of a river," said I, "which I have left about a mile behind me? Is it the Sawdde?"

"Nage," said he. "It is the Lleidach."

Then looking at me with great curiosity he asked if I came from the north country.

"Yes," said I, "I certainly come from there."

"I am glad to hear it," said he, "for I have long wished to see a man from the north country."

"Did you never see one before?" said I.

"Never in my life," he replied: "men from the north country seldom show themselves in these parts."

"Well," said I; "I am not ashamed to say that I come from the north."

"Ain't you? Well, I don't know that you have any particular reason to be ashamed, for it is rather your misfortune than your fault; but the idea of any one coming from the north—ho, ho!"

"Perhaps in the north," said I, "they laugh at a man from the south."

"Laugh at a man from the south! No, no; they can't do that."

"Why not?" said I; "why shouldn't the north laugh at the south as well as the south at the north?"

"Why shouldn't it? why, you talk like a fool. How could the north laugh at the south as long as the south remains the south and the north the north? Laugh at the south! you talk like a fool, David, and if you go on in that way I shall be angry with you. However, I'll excuse you; you are from the north, and what can one expect from the north but nonsense? Now tell me, do you of the north eat and drink like other people? What do you live upon?"

"Why, as for myself," said I, "I generally live on the best I can get."

"Let's hear what you eat; bacon and eggs?"

"O yes! I eat bacon and eggs when I can get nothing better."

"And what do you drink? Can you drink ale?"

"O yes," said I; "I am very fond of ale when it's good. Perhaps you will stand a pint?"

"Hm," said the man looking somewhat blank; "there is no ale in the Pandy and there is no public-house near at hand, otherwise——Where are you going to-night?"

"To Gutter Vawr."

"Well, then, you had better not loiter; Gutter Vawr is a long way off over the mountain. It will be dark, I am afraid, long before you get to Gutter Vawr. Good evening, David! I am glad to have seen you, for I have long wished to see a man from the north country. Good evening! you will find plenty of good ale at Gutter Vawr."

I went on my way. The road led in a south-eastern direction gradually upward to very lofty regions. After walking about half-an-hour I saw a kind of wooden house on wheels drawn by two horses coming down the hill towards me. A short black-looking fellow in brown-top boots, corduroy breeches, jockey coat and jockey cap sat on the box, holding the reins in one hand

and a long whip in the other. Beside him was a swarthy woman in a wild flaunting dress. Behind the box out of the fore part of the caravan peered two or three black children's heads. A pretty little foal about four months' old came frisking and gambolling now before now beside the horses, whilst a colt of some sixteen months followed more leisurely behind. When the caravan was about ten yards distant I stopped and raising my left hand with the little finger pointed aloft I exclaimed:—

"Shoon, Kaulomengro, shoon! In Dibbel's nav, where may tu be jawing to?"

Stopping his caravan with considerable difficulty the small black man glared at me for a moment like a wild cat, and then said in a voice partly snappish, partly kind:—

"Savo shan tu? Are you one of the Ingrines?"

"I am the chap what certain folks calls the Romany Rye."

"Well, I'll be jiggered if I wasn't thinking so and if I wasn't penning so to my juwa as we were welling down the chong."

"It is a long time since we last met, Captain Bosvile, for I suppose I may call you Captain now."

"Yes! the old man has been dead and buried this many a year, and his sticks and titles are now mine. Poor soul, I hope he is happy; indeed I know he is, for he lies in Cockleshell churchyard, the place he was always so fond of, and has his Sunday waistcoat on him with the fine gold buttons, which he was always so proud of. Ah, you may well call it a long time since we met—why, it can't be less than thirty year."

"Something about that—you were a boy then of about fifteen."

"So I was, and you a tall young slip of about twenty; well, how did you come to jin mande?"

"Why, I knew you by your fighting mug—there an't such another mug in England."

"No more there an't—my old father always used to say it was of no use hitting it for it alway sbroke his knuckles. Well, it was kind of you to jin mande after so many years. The

last time I think I saw you was near Brummagem when you were travelling about with Jasper Petulengro and—I say, what's become of the young woman you used to keep company with?"

"I don't know."

"You don't? Well, she was a fine young woman and a vartuous. I remember her knocking down and giving a black eye to my old mother, who was wonderfully deep in Romany, for making a bit of a gillie about you and she. What was the song? Lord, how my memory fails me! O, here it is:—

"Ando berkho Rye canó
Oteh pivò teh khavó.—
Tu lerasque ando berkho piranee
Teh corbatcha por pico."

"Have you seen Jasper Petulengro lately?" said I.

"Yes, I have seen him, but it was at a very considerable distance. Jasper Petulengro doesn't come near the likes of we now. Lord! you can't think what grand folks he and his wife have become of late years, and all along of a

trumpery lil which some body has written about them. Why, they are hand and glove with the Queen and Prince, and folks say that his wife is going to be made dame of honour, and Jasper Justice of the Peace and Deputy Ranger of Windsor Park."

"Only think," said I. "And now tell me, what brought you into Wales?"

"What brought me into Wales? I'll tell you; my own fool's head. I was doing nicely in the Kaulo Gav and the neighbourhood, when I must needs pack up and come into these parts with bag and baggage, wife and childer. I thought that Wales was what it was some thirty years agone when our foky used to say —for I was never here before—that there was something to be done in it; but I was never more mistaken in my life. The country is overrun with Hindity mescrey, woild Irish, with whom the Romany foky stand no chance. The fellows underwork me at tinkering, and the women outscream my wife at telling fortunes—moreover, they say the country is theirs and not intended for niggers like we, and as they are

generally in vast numbers what can a poor little Roman family do but flee away before them? a pretty journey I have made into Wales. Had I not contrived to pass off a poggado bav engro —a broken-winded horse—at a fair, I at this moment should be without a tringoruschee piece in my pocket. I am now making the best of my way back to Brummagem, and if ever I come again to this Hindity country may Calcraft nash me."

"I wonder you didn't try to serve some of the Irish out," said I.

"I served one out, brother; and my wife and childer helped to wipe off a little of the score. We had stopped on a nice green, near a village over the hills in Glamorganshire, when up comes a Hindity family, and bids us take ourselves off. Now it so happened that there was but one man and a woman and some childer, so I laughed, and told them to drive us off. Well, brother, without many words, there was a regular scrimmage. The Hindity mush came at me, the Hindity mushi at my juwa, and the Hindity chaves at my chai. It didn't last long, brother

In less than three minutes I had hit the Hindity mush, who was a plaguey big fellow, but couldn't fight, just under the point of the chin, and sent him to the ground with all his senses gone. My juwa had almost scratched an eye out of the Hindity mushi, and my chai had sent the Hindity childer scampering over the green. 'Who has got to quit now?' said I to the Hindity mush after he had got on his legs, looking like a man who has been cut down after hanging just a minute and a half. 'Who has got notice to quit, now, I wonder?' Well, brother, he didn't say anything, nor did any of them, but after a little time they all took themselves off, with a cart they had, to the south. Just as they got to the edge of the green, however, they turned round and gave a yell which made all our blood cold. I knew what it meant, and said, 'This is no place for us.' So we got everything together, and came away; and, though the horses were tired, never stopped till we had got ten miles from the place; and well it was we acted as we did, for, had we stayed, I have no doubt that a whole Hindity

clan would have been down upon us before morning and cut our throats."

"Well," said I, "farewell. I can't stay any longer. As it is, I shall be late at Gutter Vawr."

"Farewell, brother!" said Captain Bosvile; and, giving a cry, he cracked his whip and set his horses in motion.

"Won't you give us sixpence to drink?" cried Mrs. Bosvile, with a rather shrill voice.

"Hold your tongue, you she-dog," said Captain Bosvile. "Is that the way in which you take leave of an old friend? Hold your tongue, and let the Ingrine gentleman jaw on his way."

I proceeded on my way as fast as I could, for the day was now closing in. My progress, however, was not very great; for the road was steep, and was continually becoming more so. In about half-an-hour I came to a little village, consisting of three or four houses; one of them, at the door of which several carts were standing, bore the sign of a tavern.

"What is the name of this place?" said I to a man who was breaking stones on the road.

"Capel Gwynfa," said he.

Rather surprised at the name, which signifies in English the Chapel of the place of bliss, I asked the man why it was called so.

"I don't know," said the man.

"Was there ever a chapel here?" said I.

"I don't know, sir; there is none now."

"I daresay there was in the old time," said I to myself, as I went on, "in which some holy hermit prayed and told his beads, and occasionally received benighted strangers. What a poetical word that Gwynfa, place of bliss, is. Owen Pugh uses it in his translation of 'Paradise Lost' to express Paradise, for he has rendered the words Paradise Lost by Coll Gwynfa —the loss of the place of bliss. I wonder whether the old scholar picked up the word here. Not unlikely. Strange fellow that Owen Pugh. Wish I had seen him. No hope of seeing him now, except in the heavenly Gwynfa. Wonder whether there is such a place. Tom Payne thinks there's not. Strange fellow that Tom Payne. Norfolk man. Wish I had never read him."

Presently I came to a little cottage with a toll-bar. Seeing a woman standing at the door, I inquired of her the name of the gate.

"Cowslip Gate, sir."

"Has it any Welsh name?"

"None that I know of, sir."

This place was at a considerable altitude, and commanded an extensive view to the south, west, and north. Heights upon heights rose behind it to the east. From here the road ran to the south for a little way nearly level, then turned abruptly to the east, and was more steep than ever. After the turn, I had a huge chalk cliff towering over me on the right, and a chalk precipice on my left. Night was now coming on fast, and, rather to my uneasiness, masses of mist began to pour down the sides of the mountain. I hurried on, the road making frequent turnings. Presently the mist swept down upon me, and was so thick that I could only see a few yards before me. I was now obliged to slacken my pace, and to advance with some degree of caution. I moved on in this way for some time, when suddenly I heard a noise, as if a

number of carts were coming rapidly down the hill. I stopped, and stood with my back close against the high bank. The noise drew nearer, and in a minute I saw indistinctly through the mist, horses, carts, and forms of men passing. In one or two cases the wheels appeared to be within a few inches of my feet. I let the train go by, and then cried out in English, "Am I right for Gutter Vawr?"

"Hey?" said a voice, after a momentary interval.

"Am I right for Gutter Vawr?" I shouted yet louder.

"Yes sure!" said a voice, probably the same.

Then instantly a much rougher voice cried, "Who the Devil are you?"

I made no answer, but went on, whilst the train continued its way rumbling down the mountain. At length I gained the top, where the road turned and led down a steep descent towards the south-west. It was now quite night, and the mist was of the thickest kind. I could just see that there was a frightful precipice on my left, so I kept to the right,

hugging the side of the hill. As I descended I heard every now and then loud noises in the vale probably proceeding from stone quarries. I was drenched to the skin, nay, through the skin, by the mist, which I verily believe was more penetrating than that described by Ab Gwilym. When I had proceeded about a mile I saw blazes down below, resembling those of furnaces, and soon after came to the foot of the hill. It was here pouring with rain, but I did not put up my umbrella as it was impossible for me to be more drenched than I was. Crossing a bridge over a kind of torrent, I found myself amongst some houses. I entered one of them from which a blaze of light and a roar of voices proceeded, and on inquiring of an old woman who confronted me in the passage, I found that I had reached my much needed haven of rest, the tavern of Gutter Vawr in the county of Glamorgan.

CHAPTER XXXI.

INN AT GUTTER VAWR.—THE HURLY-BURLY.—BARA Y CAWS.—CHANGE OF MANNER.—WELSH MISTRUST.—WONDERS OF RUSSIA.—THE EMPEROR.—THE GRAND GHOST STORY.

THE old woman who confronted me in the passage of the inn turned out to be the landlady. On learning that I intended to pass the night at her house she conducted me into a small room on the right-hand side of the passage, which proved to be the parlour. It was cold and comfortless, for there was no fire in the grate. She told me, however, that one should be lighted, and going out presently returned with a couple of buxom wenches, who I soon found were her daughters. The good lady had little or no English, the girls, however, had plenty, and of a good kind too. They soon lighted a fire and then the mother inquired if I wished for any supper.

"Certainly," said I, "for I have not eaten anything since I left Llandovery. What can I have?"

"We have veal and bacon," said she.

"That will do," said I; "fry me some veal and bacon, and I shan't complain. But pray tell me what prodigious noise is that which I hear on the other side of the passage?"

"It is only the miners and the carters in the kitchen making merry," said one of the girls.

"Is there a good fire there?" said I.

"O yes," said the girl, "we have always a good fire in the kitchen."

"Well then," said I, "I shall go there till supper is ready, for I am wet to the skin, and this fire casts very little heat."

"You will find them a rough set in the kitchen," said the girl.

"I don't care if I do," said I; "when people are rough I am civil, and I have always found that civility beats roughness in the long run." Then going out I crossed the passage and entered the kitchen.

It was nearly filled with rough unkempt

fellows smoking, drinking, whistling, singing, shouting or jabbering, some in a standing, some in a sitting posture. My entrance seemed at once to bring everything to a dead stop; the smokers ceased to smoke, the hand that was conveying the glass or the mug to the mouth was arrested in air, the hurly-burly ceased and every eye was turned upon me with a strange inquiring stare. Without allowing myself to be disconcerted I advanced to the fire, spread out my hands before it for a minute, gave two or three deep ahs of comfort, and then turning round said: "Rather a damp night, gentlemen—fire cheering to one who has come the whole way from Llandovery—Taking a bit of a walk in Wales, to see the scenery and to observe the manners and customs of the inhabitants—Fine country, gentlemen, noble prospects, hill and dale—Fine people too—open-hearted and generous; no wonder! descendants of the Ancient Britons—Hope I don't intrude—other room rather cold and smoking—If I do will retire at once—don't wish to interrupt any gentlemen in their avocations or

deliberations—scorn to do any thing ungenteel or calculated to give offence—hope I know how to behave myself—ought to do so—learnt grammar at the High school at Edinburgh."

"Offence, intrusion!" cried twenty voices. "God bless your honour! no intrusion and no offence at all—sit down—sit here—won't you drink?"

"Please to sit here, sir," said an old grimy-looking man, getting up from a seat in the chimney-corner—"this is no seat for me whilst you are here, it belongs to you—sit down in it," and laying hold of me he compelled me to sit down in the chair of dignity, whilst half-a-dozen hands pushed mugs of beer towards my face; these, however, I declined to partake of on the very satisfactory ground that I had not taken supper, and that it was a bad thing to drink before eating, more especially after coming out of a mist.

"Have you any news to tell of the war, sir?" said a large rough fellow, who was smoking a pipe.

"The last news that I heard of the war,"

said I, "was that the snow was two feet deep at Sebastopol."

"I heard three," said the man; "however, if there be but two it must be bad work for the poor soldiers. I suppose you think that we shall beat the Russians in the end."

"No, I don't," said I; "the Russians are a young nation and we are an old; they are coming on and we are going off; every dog has its day."

"That's true," said the man, "but I am sorry that you think we shall not beat the Russians, for the Russians are a bad set."

"Can you speak Welsh?" said a darkish man with black bristly hair and a small inquisitive eye.

"O, I know two words in Welsh," said I, "bara y caws."

"That's bread and cheese," said the man, then turning to a neighbour of his he said in Welsh: "He knows nothing of Cumraeg, only two words; we may say anything we please; he can't understand us. What a long nose he has!"

"Mind that he an't nosing us," said his neighbour, "I should be loth to wager that he doesn't understand Welsh; and after all he didn't say that he did not, but got off by saying he understood those two words."

"No, he doesn't understand Welsh," said the other; "no Sais understands Welsh, and this is a Sais. Now with regard to that piece of job-work which you and I undertook." And forthwith he and the other entered into a disquisition about the job-work.

The company soon got into its old train, drinking and smoking and making a most terrific hullabaloo. Nobody took any farther notice of me. I sat snug in the chimney-corner, trying to dry my wet things, and as the heat was very great partially succeeded. In about half-an-hour one of the girls came to tell me that my supper was ready, whereupon I got up and said: "Gentlemen, I thank you for your civility: I am now going to supper; perhaps before I turn in for the night I may look in upon you again." Then without waiting for an answer I left the kitchen and went into the other room, where I

found a large dish of veal cutlets and fried bacon awaiting me, and also a smoking bowl of potatoes. Ordering a jug of ale I sat down, and what with hunger and the goodness of the fare, for everything was first-rate, made one of the best suppers I ever made in my life.

Supper over I called for a glass of whiskey-and-water, over which I trifled for about half-an-hour and then betook myself again to the kitchen. Almost as soon as I entered, the company, who seemed to be discussing some point, and were not making much hurly-burly, became silent and looked at me in a suspicious and uneasy manner. I advanced towards the fire. The old man who had occupied the seat in the chimney-corner and had resigned it to me, had again taken possession of it. As I drew near to the fire he looked upon the ground, and seemed by no means disposed to vacate the place of honour; after a few moments, however, he got up and offered me the seat with a slight motion of his hand and without saying a word. I did not decline it but sat down, and the old gentleman took a chair near. Universal silence

now prevailed; sullen looks were cast at me; and I saw clearly enough that I was not welcome. Frankness was now my only resource. "What's the matter, gentlemen?" said I; "you are silent and don't greet me kindly; have I given you any cause of offence?" No one uttered a word in reply for nearly a minute, when the old man said slowly and deliberately: "Why, sir, the long and the short of it is this: we have got it into our heads that you understand every word of our discourse; now, do you or do you not?"

"Understand every word of your discourse," said I; "I wish I did; I would give five pounds to understand every word of your discourse."

"That's a clever attempt to get off, sir," said the old man, "but it won't exactly do. Tell us whether you know more Welsh than bara y caws; or to speak more plainly, whether you understand a good deal of what we say."

"Well," said I, "I do understand more Welsh than bara y caws—I do understand a considerable part of a Welsh conversation—

moreover, I can read Welsh and have the life of Tom O'r Nant at my fingers' ends."

"Well, sir, that is speaking plain, and I will tell you plainly that we don't like to have strangers among us who understand our discourse, more especially if they be gentlefolks."

"That's strange," said I; "a Welshman or foreigner, gentle or simple, may go into a public house in England, and nobody cares a straw whether he understands the discourse of the company or not."

"That may be the custom in England," said the old man, "but it is not so in Wales."

"What have you got to conceal?" said I, "I suppose you are honest men."

"I hope we are, sir," said the old man; "but I must tell you, once for all, that we don't like strangers to listen to our discourse."

"Come," said I, "I will not listen to your discourse, but you shall listen to mine. I have a wonderful deal to say if I once begin; I have been everywhere."

"Well, sir," said the old man, "if you have anything to tell us about where you have been

and what you have seen we shall be glad to hear you."

"Have you ever been in Russia?" shouted a voice, that of the large rough fellow who asked me the question about the Russian war.

"O yes, I have been in Russia," said I.

"Well, what kind of a country is it?"

"Very different from this," said I, "which is a little country up in a corner, full of hills and mountains; that is an immense country, extending from the Baltic Sea to the confines of China, almost as flat as a pancake, there not being a hill to be seen for nearly two thousand miles."

"A very poor country isn't it, always covered with ice and snow?"

"O no; it is one of the richest countries in the world, producing all kinds of grain, with noble rivers intersecting it, and in some parts covered with stately forests. In the winter, which is rather long, there is a good deal of ice and snow, it is true, but in the summer the weather is warmer than here."

"And are there any towns and cities in Russia, sir, as there are in Britain?" said the

old man, who had resigned his seat in the chimney-corner to me; "I suppose not, or if there be, nothing equal to Hereford or Bristol, in both of which I have been."

"O yes," said I, "there are plenty of towns and cities. The two principal ones are Moscow and Saint Petersburg, both of which are capitals. Moscow is a fine old city, far up the country, and was the original seat of empire. In it there is a wonderful building called the Kremlin, situated on a hill. It is partly palace, partly temple, and partly fortress. In one of its halls are I don't know how many crowns, taken from various kings, whom the Russians have conquered. But the most remarkable thing in the Kremlin is a huge bell in a cellar or cave, close by one of the churches; it is twelve feet high, and the sound it gives when struck with an iron bar, for there are no clappers to Russian bells, is so loud that the common Russians say it can be heard over the empire. The other city, Saint Petersburg, where the court generally reside, is a modern and very fine city; so fine indeed, that I have no hesitation in saying that neither

Bristol nor Hereford is worthy to be named in the same day with it. Many of the streets are miles in length and straight as an arrow. The Nefsky Prospect, as it is called, a street which runs from the grand square, where stands the Emperor's palace, to the monastery of Saint Alexander Nefsky, is nearly three miles in length and is full of noble shops and houses. The Neva, a river twice as broad and twice as deep as the Thames, and whose waters are clear as crystal, runs through the town, having on each side of it a superb quay, fenced with granite, which affords one of the most delightful walks imaginable. If I had my choice of all the cities of the world to live in, I would choose Saint Petersburg."

"And did you ever see the Emperor?" said the rough fellow, whom I have more than once mentioned, "did you ever see the Emperor Nicholas?"

"O yes; I have seen him frequently."

"Well, what kind of a man is he? we should like to know."

"A man of colossal stature, with a fine,

noble, but rather stern and severe aspect. I think I now see him, with his grey cloak, cocked hat, and white waving plumes, striding down the Nefsky Prospect, and towering by a whole head over other people."

"Bravo! Did you ever see him at the head of his soldiers?"

"O yes! I have seen the Emperor review forty thousand of his chosen troops in the Champs de Mars, and a famous sight it was. There stood the great, proud man looking at his warriors as they manœuvred before him. Two-thirds of them were cavalry, and each horseman was mounted on a beautiful blood charger of Cossack or English breed, and arrayed in a superb uniform. The blaze, glitter and glory were too much for my eyes, and I was frequently obliged to turn them away. The scene upon the whole put me in mind of an immense field of tulips of various dyes, for the colours of the dresses, of the banners and the plumes, were as gorgeous and manifold as the hues of those queenly flowers."

"Bravo!" said twenty voices; "the gentle-

man speaks like an areithiwr. Have you been in other countries besides Russia?"

"O yes! I have been in Turkey, the people of which are not Christians, but frequently put Christians to shame by their good faith and honesty. I have been in the land of the Maugrabins, or Moors—a people who live on a savoury dish, called couscousoo, and have the gloomiest faces and the most ferocious hearts under heaven. I have been in Italy, whose people, though the most clever in the world, are the most unhappy, owing to the tyranny of a being called the Pope, who, when I saw him, appeared to be under the influence of strong drink. I have been in Portugal, the people of which supply the whole world with wine, and drink only water themselves. I have been in Spain, a very fine country, the people of which are never so happy as when paying other folks' reckonings. I have been——but the wind is blowing wildly without, and the rain pelting against the windows;—this is a capital night for a ghost story: shall I tell you a ghost story which I learnt in Spain?"

"Yes, sir, pray do; we all love ghost stories. Do tell us the ghost story of Spain."

Thereupon I told the company Lope de Vega's ghost story, which is decidedly the best ghost story in the world.

Long and loud was the applause which followed the conclusion of the grand ghost story of the world, in the midst of which I got up, bade the company good-night, and made my exit. Shortly afterwards I desired to be shown to my sleeping apartment. It was a very small room upstairs, in the back part of the house; and I make no doubt was the chamber of the two poor girls, the landlady's daughters, as I saw various articles of female attire lying about. The spirit of knight-errantry within me was not, however, sufficiently strong to prevent me from taking possession of the female dormitory; so, forthwith divesting myself of every portion of my habiliments, which were steaming like a boiling tea-kettle, I got into bed between the blankets, and in a minute was fast in the arms of Morpheus.

CHAPTER XXXII.

MORNING.—A CHEERLESS SCENE.—THE CARTER.—ODE TO GLAMORGAN. — STARTLING HALLOO. — ONE-SIDED LIBERTY. — CLERICAL PROFESSION. — DE COURCY. — LOVE OF THE DROP. — INDEPENDENT SPIRIT.—ANOTHER PEOPLE.

I SLEPT soundly through the night. At about eight o'clock on the following morning I got up and looked out of the window of my room, which fronted the north. A strange scene presented itself: a roaring brook was foaming along towards the west, just under the window. Immediately beyond it was a bank, not of green turf, grey rock, or brown mould, but of coal rubbish, coke and cinders; on the top of this bank was a fellow performing some dirty office or other, with a spade and barrow; beyond him, on the side of a hill, was a tramway, up which a horse was straining, drawing a load of something towards the north-west. Beyond the

tramway was a grove of yellow-looking firs; beyond the grove a range of white houses with blue roofs, occupied, I supposed, by miners and their families; and beyond these I caught a sight of the mountain on the top of which I had been the night before, only a partial one, however, as large masses of mist were still hanging about it. The morning was moist and dripping, and nothing could look more cheerless and uncomfortable than the entire scene.

I put on my things, which were still not half dry, and went down into the little parlour, where I found an excellent fire awaiting me, and a table spread for breakfast. The breakfast was delicious, consisting of excellent tea, buttered toast and Glamorgan sausages, which I really think are not a whit inferior to those of Epping. After breakfast I went into the kitchen, which was now only occupied by two or three people. Seeing a large brush on a dresser, I took it up, and was about to brush my nether habiliments, which were terribly bespattered with half-dried mire. Before, however, I could begin, up started one of the men, a wild shock-headed

fellow dressed like a carter, in rough blue frieze coat, yellow broad corduroy trowsers, grey woollen stockings and highlows, and snatching the brush out of my hand, fell to brushing me most vigorously, purring and blowing all the time in a most tremendous manner. I did not refuse his services, but let him go on, and to reward him, as I thought, spoke kindly to him, asking him various questions. "Are you a carter?" said I. No answer. "One of Twm O'r Nant's people?" No answer. "Famous fellow that Twm O'r Nant, wasn't he? Did you ever hear how he got the great tree in at Carmarthen Gate? What is wood per foot at present? Whom do you cart for? Or are you your own master? If so, how many horses do you keep?"

To not one of these questions, nor to a dozen others which I put, both in English and Welsh, did my friend with the brush return any verbal answer, though I could occasionally hear a kind of stifled giggle proceeding from him. Having at length thoroughly brushed not only my clothes, but my boots and my hat, which last article he

took from my head, and placed on again very dexterously, after brushing it, he put the brush down on the dresser, and then advancing to me made me a bow, and waving his forefinger, backwards and forwards, before my face, he said, with a broad grin: "Nice gentleman—will do anything for him but answer questions, and let him hear my discourse. Love to listen to his pleasant stories of foreign lands, ghosts and tylwith teg; but before him deem it wise to be mum, quite mum. Know what he comes about. Wants to hear discourse of poor man, that he may learn from it poor man's little ways and invirmities, and mark them down in one small, little book to serve for fun to Lord Palmerston and the other great gentlefolks in London. Nice man, civil man, I don't deny; and clebber man too, for he knows Welsh, and has been everywhere—but fox—old fox—lives at Plas y Cadno.*

Having been informed that there was a considerable iron foundry close by, I thought it

* Fox's Court—perhaps London.

would be worth my while to go and see it. I entered the premises, and was standing and looking round, when a man with the appearance of a respectable mechanic came up and offered to show me over the place. I gladly accepted his offer, and he showed me all about the iron-foundry. I saw a large steam-engine at full play, terrible furnaces, and immense heaps of burning, crackling cinders, and a fiery stream of molten metal rolling along. After seeing what there was to be seen, I offered a piece of silver to my kind conductor, which he at once refused. On my asking him, however, to go to the inn and have a friendly glass, he smiled, and said he had no objection. So we went to the inn, and had two friendly glasses of whiskey-and-water together, and also some discourse. I asked him if there were any English employed on the premises. "None," said he, "nor Irish either; we are all Welsh." Though he was a Welshman, his name was a very common English one.

After paying the reckoning, which only amounted to three and sixpence, I departed for Swansea, distant about thirteen miles. Gutter

Vawr consists of one street, extending for some little way along the Swansea road, the foundry, and a number of huts and houses scattered here and there. The population is composed almost entirely of miners, the workers at the foundry, and their families. For the first two or three miles the country through which I passed did not at all prepossess me in favour of Glamorganshire: it consisted of low, sullen, peaty hills. Subsequently, however, it improved rapidly, becoming bold, wild, and pleasantly wooded. The aspect of the day improved, also, with the appearance of the country. When I first started the morning was wretched and drizzly, but in less than an hour it cleared up wonderfully, and the sun began to flash out. As I looked on the bright luminary I thought of Ab Gwilym's ode to the sun and Glamorgan, and with breast heaving and with eyes full of tears, I began to repeat parts of it, or rather of a translation made in my happy boyish years :—

"Each morn, benign of countenance,
Upon Glamorgan's pennon glance!
Each afternoon in beauty clear
Above my own dear bounds appear!

Bright outline of a blessèd clime,
Again, though sunk, arise sublime—
Upon my errand, swift repair,
And unto green Glamorgan bear
Good days and terms of courtesy
From my dear country and from me!
Move round—but need I thee command?—
Its chalk white halls, which cheerful stand—
Pleasant thy own pavilions too—
Its fields and orchards fair to view.

"O, pleasant is thy task and high
In radiant warmth to roam the sky,
To keep from ill that kindly ground,
Its meads and farms, where mead is found,
A land whose commons live content,
Where each man's lot is excellent,
Where hosts to hail thee shall upstand,
Where lads are bold and lasses bland,
A land I oft from hill that's high
Have gazed upon with raptur'd eye;
Where maids are trained in virtue's school,
Where duteous wives spin dainty wool;
A country with each gift supplied,
Confronting Cornwall's cliffs of pride."

Came to Llanguick, a hamlet situated near a tremendous gorge, the sides of which were covered with wood. Thence to the village of Tawy Bridge, at the bottom of a beautiful valley, through which runs the Tawy, which, after the Taf, is the most considerable river in Glamorganshire. Continuing my course, I passed by an enormous edifice which stood on

my right hand. It had huge chimneys, which were casting forth smoke, and from within I heard the noise of a steam-engine and the roar of furnaces.

"What place is this?" said I to a boy.

"Gwaith haiarn, sir; ym perthyn i Mr. Pearson. Mr. Pearson's iron works, sir."

I proceeded, and in about half-an-hour saw a man walking before me in the same direction in which I was. He was going very briskly, but I soon came up to him. He was a small, well-made fellow, with reddish hair and ruddy, determined countenance, somewhat tanned. He wore a straw hat, checkered shirt, open at the neck, canvas trousers, and blue jacket. On his feet were shoes remarkably thin, but no stockings, and in his hand he held a stout stick, with which, just before I overtook him, he struck a round stone which lay on the ground, sending it flying at least fifty yards before him on the road, and following it in its flight with a wild and somewhat startling halloo.

"Good day, my friend," said I; "you seem to be able to use a stick."

"And sure I ought to be, your honour, seeing as how my father taught me, who was the best fighting man with a stick that the Shanavests ever had. Many is the head of a Caravaut that he has broken with some such an Alpeen wattle as the one I am carrying with me here."

"A good thing," said I, "that there are no Old Waistcoats and Cravats at present, at least bloody factions bearing those names."

"Your honour thinks so! Faith! I am clane of a contrary opinion. I wish the ould Shanavests and Caravauts were fighting still; and I among them. Faith! there was some life in Ireland in their days."

"And plenty of death too," said I. "How fortunate it is that the Irish have the English among them, to prevent their cutting each other's throats."

"The English prevent the Irish from cutting each other's throats! Well! if they do, it is only that they may have the pleasure of cutting them themselves. The bloody tyrants! too long has their foot been upon the neck of poor old Ireland."

"How do the English tyrannise over Ireland?"

"How do they tyrannise over her? Don't they prevent her from having the free exercise of her Catholic religion, and make her help to support their own Protestant one?"

"Well, and don't the Roman Catholics prevent the Protestants from having the free exercise of their religion, whenever they happen to be the most numerous, and don't they make them help to support the Roman Catholic religion?"

"Of course they do, and quite right. Had I my will there shouldn't be a place of Protestant worship left standing, or a Protestant churl allowed to go about with a head unbroken."

"Then why do you blame the Protestants for keeping the Romans a little under?"

"Why do I blame them? A purty question! Why, an't they wrong, and an't we right?"

"But they say that they are right and you wrong."

"They say! who minds what they say? Havn't we the word of the blessed Pope that we are right?"

"And they say that they have the word of the blessed Gospel that you are wrong."

"The Gospel! who cares for the Gospel? Surely you are not going to compare the Gospel with the Pope?"

"Well, they certainly are not to be named in the same day."

"They are not? Then good luck to you! We are both of the same opinion. Ah, I thought your honour was a rale Catholic. Now, tell me from what kingdom of Ireland does your honour hail?"

"Why, I was partly educated in Munster."

"In Munster! Hoorah! Here's the hand of a countryman to your honour. Ah, it was asy to be seen from the learning, which your honour shows, that your honour is from Munster. There's no spot in Ireland like Munster for learning. What says the old song?

"'Ulster for a soldier,
Connaught for a thief,
Munster for learning,
And Leinster for beef.'

"Hoorah for learned Munster! and down

with beggarly, thievish Connaught! I would that a Connaught man would come athwart me now, that I might break his thief's head with my Alpeen."

"You don't seem to like the Connaught men," said I.

"Like them! who can like them? a parcel of beggarly thievish blackguards. So your honour was edicated in Munster, I mane partly edicated. I suppose by your saying that you were partly edicated, that your honour was intended for the clerical profession, but being over fond of the drop was forced to lave college before your edication was quite completed, and so for want of a better profession took up with that of merchandize. Ah, the love of the drop at college has prevented many a clever young fellow from taking holy orders. Well, it's a pity but it can't be helped. I am fond of a drop myself, and when we get to ——— shall be happy to offer your honour a glass of whiskey. I hope your honour and I shall splice the mainbrace together before we part."

"I suppose," said I, "by your talking of splicing the mainbrace that you are a sailor."

"I am, your honour, and hail from the Cove of Cork in the kingdom of Munster."

"I know it well," said I. "It is the best sea-basin in the world. Well, how came you into these parts?"

"I'll tell your honour; my ship is at Swansea, and having a relation working at the foundry behind us I came to see him."

"Are you in the royal service?"

"I am not, your honour; I was once in the royal service, but having a dispute with the boatswain at Spithead, I gave him a wipe, jumped overboard and swam ashore. After that I sailed for Cuba, got into the merchants' service there and made several voyages to the Black Coast. At present I am in the service of the merchants of Cork."

"I wonder that you are not now in the royal service," said I, "since you are so fond of fighting. There is hot work going on at present up the Black Sea, and brave men, especially Irishmen, are in great request."

"Yes, brave Irishmen are always in great request with England when she has a battle to fight. At other times they are left to lie in the mud with the chain round their necks. It has been so ever since the time of De Courcy, and I suppose always will be so, unless Irishmen all become of my mind, which is not likely. Were the Irish all of my mind, the English would find no Irish champion to fight their battles when the French or the Russians come to beard them."

"By De Courcy," said I, "you mean the man whom the King of England confined in the Tower of London after taking from him his barony in the county of Cork."

"Of course, your honour, and whom he kept in the Tower till the King of France sent over a champion to insult and beard him, when the king was glad to take De Courcy out of the dungeon to fight the French champion, for divil a one of his own English fighting men dared take the Frenchman in hand."

"A fine fellow that De Courcy," said I.

"Rather too fond of the drop though, like

your honour and myself, for after he had caused the French champion to flee back into France he lost the greater part of the reward which the King of England promised him solely by making too free with the strong drink. Does your honour remember that part of the story?"

"I think I do," said I, "but I should be very glad to hear you relate it."

"Then your honour shall. Right glad was the King of England when the French champion fled back to France, for no sooner did the dirty spalpeen hear that they were going to bring De Courcy against him, the fame of whose strength and courage filled the whole world, than he betook himself back to his own country and was never heard of more. Right glad, I say, was the King of England, and gave leave to De Courcy to return to Ireland, 'And you shall have,' said he, 'of the barony which I took from you all that you can ride round on the first day of your return.' So De Courcy betook himself to Ireland and to his barony, but he was anything but a lucky man, this De Courcy, for his friends and relations and tenantry, hearing of his coming,

prepared a grand festival for him with all kinds of illigant viands and powerful liquors, and when he arrived there it was waiting for him, and down to it he sat, and ate and drank, and for joy of seeing himself once more amongst his friends and tenantry in the hall of his forefathers and for love of the drop, which he always had, he drank of the powerful liquors more than he ought, and the upshot was that he became drunk, agus do bhi an duine maith sin misgeadh do ceathar o glog; the good gentleman was drunk till four o'clock, and when he awoke he found that he had but two hours of day remaining to win back his brave barony. However, he did not lose heart, but mounted his horse and set off riding as fast as a man just partly recovered from intoxication could be expected to do, and he contrived to ride round four parishes, and only four, and these four parishes were all that he recovered of his brave barony, and all that he had to live upon till his dying day, and all that he had to leave to his descendants, so that De Courcy could scarcely be called a very lucky man, after all."

Shortly after my friend the sailor had concluded his account of De Courcy we arrived in the vicinity of a small town or rather considerable village. It stood on the right-hand side of the road, fronting the east, having a high romantic hill behind it on the sides of which were woods, groves, and pleasant-looking white houses.

"What place is this?" said I to my companion.

"This is ——, your honour; and here, if your honour will accept a glass of whiskey we will splice the mainbrace together."

"Thank you," said I; "but I am in haste to get to Swansea. Moreover, if I am over fond of the drop, as you say I am, the sooner I begin to practise abstinence the better."

"Very true, your honour! Well, at any rate, when your honour gets to Swansea, you will not be able to say that Pat Flannagan walked for miles with your honour along the road, without offering your honour a glass of whiskey."

"Nor shall Pat Flannagan be able to say the

same thing of my honour. I have a shilling in my pocket at Pat Flannagan's service, if he chooses to splice with it the mainbrace for himself and for me."

"Thank your honour; but I have a shilling in my own pocket, and a dollar too, and a five-pound note besides; so I needn't be beholden for drink money to anybody under the sun."

"Well then, farewell! Here's my hand!—Slan leat a Phatraic ui Flannagan!"

"Slan leat a dhuine-uasail!" said Patrick, giving me his hand; "and health, hope and happiness to ye."

Thereupon he turned aside to —— and I continued my way to Swansea. Arrived at a place called Glandwr, about two miles from Swansea, I found that I was splashed from top to toe, for the roads were frightfully miry, and was sorry to perceive that my boots had given way at the soles, large pieces of which were sticking out. I must, however, do the poor things the justice to say, that it was no wonder that they were in this dilapidated condition, for in those boots I had walked at least two

hundred miles, over all kinds of paths, since I had got them soled at Llangollen. "Well," said I to myself, "it won't do to show myself at Swansea in this condition, more especially as I shall go to the best hotel; I must try and get myself made a little decent here." Seeing a little inn, on my right, I entered it, and addressing myself to a neat comfortable landlady, who was standing within the bar, I said:—

"Please to let me have a glass of ale!—and, hearkee; as I have been walking along the road, I should be glad of the services of the 'boots.'"

"Very good, sir;" said the landlady with a curtsey.

Then showing me into a nice little sanded parlour, she brought me the glass of ale, and presently sent in a lad with a boot-jack to minister to me. O, what can't a little money effect? For sixpence in that small nice inn, I had a glass of ale, my boots cleaned and the excrescences cut off, my clothes wiped with a dwile, and then passed over with a brush, and was myself thanked over and over again. Starting again with all the spirited confidence of one

who has just cast off his slough, I soon found myself in the suburbs of Swansea. As I passed under what appeared to be a railroad bridge I inquired in Welsh of an ancient-looking man, in coaly habiliments, if it was one. He answered in the same language that it was, then instantly added in English:—

"You have taken your last farewell of Wales, sir; it's no use speaking Welsh farther on."

I passed some immense edifices, probably manufactories, and was soon convinced that, whether I was in Wales or not, I was no longer amongst Welsh. The people whom I met did not look like Welsh. They were taller and bulkier than the Cambrians, and were speaking a dissonant English jargon. The women had much the appearance of Dutch fisherwomen; some of them were carrying huge loads on their heads. I spoke in Welsh to two or three whom I overtook.

"No Welsh, sir!"

"Why don't you speak Welsh?" said I.

"Because we never learnt it. We are not Welsh."

"Who are you then?"

"English; some calls us Flamings."

"Ah, ah!" said I to myself; "I had forgot."

Presently I entered the town, a large, bustling, dirty, gloomy place, and inquiring for the first hotel was directed to the "Mackworth Arms," in Wine Street.

As soon as I was shown into the parlour I summoned the "boots," and on his making his appearance I said in a stern voice: "My boots want soling; let them be done by to-morrow morning."

"Can't be, sir; it's now Saturday afternoon, and the shoemaker couldn't begin them to-night!"

"But you must make him!" said I; "and look here, I shall give him a shilling extra, and you an extra shilling for seeing after him."

"Yes, sir; I'll see after him—they shall be done, sir. Bring you your slippers instantly. Glad to see you again in Swansea, sir, looking so well."

CHAPTER XXXIII.

SWANSEA.—THE FLEMINGS.—TOWARDS ENGLAND.

SWANSEA is called by the Welsh Abertawé, which signifies the mouth of the Tawy. Aber, as I have more than once had occasion to observe, signifies the place where a river enters into the sea or joins another. It is a Gaelic as well as a Cumric word, being found in the Gaelic names Aberdeen and Lochaber, and there is good reason for supposing that the word harbour is derived from it. Swansea or Swansey is a compound word of Scandinavian origin, which may mean either a river abounding with swans, or the river of Swanr, the name of some northern adventurer who settled down at its mouth. The final ea or ey is the Norwegian

aa, which signifies a running water; it is of frequent occurrence in the names of rivers in Norway, and is often found, similarly modified, in those of other countries where the adventurous Norwegians formed settlements.

Swansea first became a place of some importance shortly after the beginning of the twelfth century. In the year 1108 the greater part of Flanders having been submerged by the sea* an immense number of Flemings came over to England, and entreated of Henry the First the king then occupying the throne that he would allot to them lands in which they might settle. The king sent them to various parts of Wales which had been conquered by his barons or those of his predecessors: a considerable number occupied Swansea and the neighbourhood; but far the greater part went to Dyfed, generally but improperly called Pembroke, the south-eastern part of which, by far the most fertile, they entirely took possession of, leaving to the Welsh the rest which is very mountainous and barren.

* Drych y Prif Oesoedd, p. 100.

I have already said that the people of Swansea stand out in broad distinctness from the Cumry, differing from them in stature, language, dress, and manners, and wish to observe that the same thing may be said of the inhabitants of every part of Wales which the Flemings colonized in any considerable numbers.

I found the accommodation very good at the "Mackworth Arms;" I passed the Saturday evening very agreeably, and slept well throughout the night. The next morning to my great joy I found my boots, capitally repaired, awaiting me before my chamber door. O the mighty effect of a little money! After breakfast I put them on, and as it was Sunday went out in order to go to church. The streets were thronged with people; a new mayor had just been elected, and his worship, attended by a number of halbert and javelin men, was going to church too. I followed the procession, which moved with great dignity and of course very slowly. The church had a high square tower and looked a very fine edifice on the outside and no less so within, for

the nave was lofty with noble pillars on each side. I stood during the whole of the service as did many others, for the congregation was so great that it was impossible to accommodate all with seats. The ritual was performed in a very satisfactory manner and was followed by an excellent sermon. I am ashamed to say that I have forgot the text, but I remember a good deal of the discourse. The preacher said amongst other things that the Gospel was not preached in vain, and that he very much doubted whether a sermon was ever delivered which did not do some good. On the conclusion of the services I strolled about in order to see the town and what pertained to it. The town is of considerable size with some remarkable edifices, spacious and convenient quays, and a commodious harbour into which the river Tawy flowing from the north empties itself. The town and harbour are overhung on the side of the east by a lofty green mountain with a Welsh name, no doubt exceedingly appropriate, but which I regret to say has escaped my memory.

After having seen all that I wished I returned

to my inn and discharged all my obligations. I then departed, framing my course eastward towards England, having traversed Wales nearly from north to south.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

LEAVE SWANSEA.—THE PANDEMONIUM.—NEATH ABBEY.—VARIED SCENERY.

It was about two o'clock of a dull and gloomy afternoon when I started from Abertawy or Swansea, intending to stop at Neath, some eight miles distant. As I passed again through the suburbs I was struck with their length and the evidences of enterprise which they exhibited,—enterprise, however, evidently chiefly connected with iron and coal, for almost every object looked awfully grimy. Crossing a bridge I proceeded to the east up a broad and spacious valley, the eastern side of which was formed by russet-coloured hills, through a vista of which I could descry a range of tall blue mountains. As I proceeded I sometimes passed pleasant groves and hedgerows, sometimes huge works; in this

valley there was a singular mixture of nature and art, of the voices of birds and the clanking of chains, of the mists of heaven and the smoke of furnaces.

I reached Llan——, a small village half-way between Swansea and Neath, and without stopping continued my course, walking very fast. I had surmounted a hill and had nearly descended that side of it which looked towards the east, having on my left, that is to the north, a wooded height, when an extraordinary scene presented itself to my eyes. Somewhat to the south rose immense stacks of chimneys surrounded by grimy diabolical-looking buildings, in the neighbourhood of which were huge heaps of cinders and black rubbish. From the chimneys, notwithstanding it was Sunday, smoke was proceeding in volumes, choking the atmosphere all around. From this pandemonium, at the distance of about a quarter of a mile to the south-west, upon a green meadow, stood, looking darkly grey, a ruin of vast size with window holes, towers, spires, and arches. Between it and the accursed pandemonium, lay

a horrid filthy place, part of which was swamp and part pool: the pool black as soot, and the swamp of a disgusting leaden colour. Across this place of filth stretched a tramway leading seemingly from the abominable mansions to the ruin. So strange a scene I had never beheld in nature. Had it been on canvas, with the addition of a number of diabolical figures, proceeding along the tramway, it might have stood for Sabbath in Hell—devils proceeding to afternoon worship, and would have formed a picture worthy of the powerful but insane painter Jerome Bos.

After standing for a considerable time staring at the strange spectacle I proceeded. Presently meeting a lad, I asked him what was the name of the ruin.

"The Abbey," he replied.

"Neath Abbey?" said I.

"Yes!"

Having often heard of this abbey, which in its day was one of the most famous in Wales, I determined to go and inspect it. It was with some difficulty that I found my way to it. It

stood, as I have already observed, in a meadow, and was on almost every side surrounded by majestic hills. To give any clear description of this ruined pile would be impossible, the dilapidation is so great, dilapidation evidently less the effect of time than of awful violence, perhaps that of gunpowder. The southern is by far the most perfect portion of the building; there you see not only walls but roofs. Fronting you full south, is a mass of masonry with two immense arches, other arches behind them: entering, you find yourself beneath a vaulted roof, and passing on you come to an oblong square which may have been a church; an iron-barred window on your right enables you to look into a mighty vault, the roof of which is supported by beautiful pillars. Then——but I forbear to say more respecting these remains for fear of stating what is incorrect, my stay amongst them having been exceedingly short.

The Abbey of Glen Neath was founded in the twelfth century by Richard Grenfield, one of the followers of Robert Fitzhamon, who subjugated Glamorgan. Neath Abbey was a very wealthy

one, the founder having endowed it with extensive tracts of fertile land along the banks of the rivers Neath and Tawy. In it the unfortunate Edward of Carnarvon sought a refuge for a few days from the rage of his revolted barons, whilst his favourite the equally unfortunate Spencer endeavoured to find a covert amidst the thickets of the wood-covered hill to the north. When Richmond landed at Milford Haven to dispute the crown with Richard the Second, the then Abbot of Neath repaired to him and gave him his benediction, in requital for which the adventurer gave him his promise that in the event of his obtaining the crown he would found a college in Glen Neath, which promise, however, after he had won the crown, he forgot to perform.* The wily abbot, when he hastened to pay worship to what he justly conceived to be the rising sun, little dreamt that he was about to bless the future father of the terrible man doomed by Providence to plant the abomination of desolation in Neath Abbey and in all the other nests of monkery throughout the land.

* Y Greal, p. 279.

Leaving the ruins I proceeded towards Neath. The scenery soon became very beautiful; not that I had left machinery altogether behind, for I presently came to a place where huge wheels were turning and there was smoke and blast, but there was much that was rural and beautiful to be seen, something like park scenery, and then there were the mountains near and in the distance. I reached Neath at about half-past four, and took up my quarters at an inn which had been recommended to me by my friend the boots at Swansea.

CHAPTER XXXV.

TOWN OF NEATH.—HOUNDS AND HUNTSMAN.—SPECTRAL CHAPEL.—THE GLOWING MOUNTAIN.

NEATH is a place of some antiquity, for it can boast of the remains of a castle and is a corporate town. There is but little Welsh spoken in it. It is situated on the Neath, and exports vast quantities of coal and iron, of both of which there are rich mines in the neighbourhood. It derives its name from the river Nedd or Neth on which it stands. Nedd or Neth is the same word as Nith the name of a river in Scotland, and is in some degree connected with Nidda the name of one in Germany. Nedd in Welsh signifies a dingle, and the word in its various forms has always something to do with lowness or inferiority of position. Amongst its forms are Nether and Nieder. The term is well

applied to the Glamorganshire river, which runs through dingles and under mountains.

The Neath has its source in the mountains of Brecon, and enters the sea some little way below the town of Neath.

On the Monday morning I resumed my journey, directing my course up the vale of Neath towards Merthyr Tydvil, distant about four-and-twenty miles. The weather was at first rainy, misty and miserable, but improved by degrees. I passed through a village which I was told was called Llanagos; close to it were immense establishments of some kind. The scenery soon became exceedingly beautiful; hills covered with wood to the tops were on either side of the dale. I passed an avenue leading somewhere through groves, and was presently overtaken and passed by hounds and a respectable-looking old huntsman on a black horse; a minute afterwards I caught a glimpse of an old red-brick mansion nearly embosomed in groves, from which proceeded a mighty cawing. Probably it belonged to the proprietor of the dogs and certainly looked a very fit mansion for a Glamorganshire squire,

justice of the peace and keeper of a pack of hounds.

I went on, the vale increasing in beauty; there was a considerable drawback, however: one of those detestable contrivances a railroad was on the farther side—along which trains were passing, rumbling and screaming.

I saw a bridge on my right hand with five or six low arches over the river, which was here full of shoals. Asked a woman the name of the bridge.

"*Pont Fawr* ei galw, sir."

I was again amongst the real Welsh—this woman had no English.

I passed by several remarkable mountains, both on the south and northern side of the vale. Late in the afternoon I came to the eastern extremity of the vale and ascended a height. Shortly afterwards I reached Rhigos, a small village.

Entering a public-house I called for ale and sat down amidst some grimy fellows, who said nothing to me and to whom I said nothing—their discourse was in Welsh and English. Of

their Welsh I understood but little, for it was a strange corrupt jargon. In about half-an-hour after leaving this place I came to the beginning of a vast moor. It was now growing rather dusk and I could see blazes here and there; occasionally I heard horrid sounds. Came to Irvan, an enormous mining-place with a spectral-looking chapel, doubtless a Methodist one. The street was crowded with rough savage-looking men. "Is this the way to Merthyr Tydvil?" said I to one.

"Yes!" bawled the fellow at the utmost stretch of his voice.

"Thank you!" said I, taking off my hat and passing on.

Forward I went, up hill and down dale. Night now set in. I passed a grove of trees and presently came to a collection of small houses at the bottom of a little hollow. Hearing a step near me I stopped and said in Welsh: "How far to Merthyr Tydvil?"

"Dim Cumrag, sir!" said a voice, seemingly that of a man.

"Good night!" said I, and without staying

to put the question in English, I pushed on up an ascent and was presently amongst trees. Heard for a long time the hooting of an owl or rather the frantic hollo. Appeared to pass by where the bird had its station. Toiled up an acclivity and when on the top stood still and looked around me. There was a glow on all sides in the heaven except in the north-east quarter. Striding on I saw a cottage on my left-hand and standing at the door the figure of a woman. "How far to Merthyr?" said I in Welsh.

"Tair milltir—three miles, sir."

Turning round a corner at the top of a hill I saw blazes here and there and what appeared to be a glowing mountain in the south-east. I went towards it down a descent which continued for a long long way; so great was the light cast by the blazes and that wonderful glowing object that I could distinctly see the little stones upon the road. After walking about half-an-hour, always going downwards, I saw a house on my left-hand and heard a noise of water opposite to it. It was a pistyll. I went to it, drank greedily and then hurried on, more

and more blazes and the glowing object looking more terrible than ever. It was now above me at some distance to the left, and I could see that it was an immense quantity of heated matter like lava, occupying the upper and middle parts of a hill and descending here and there almost to the bottom in a zig-zag and tortuous manner. Between me and the hill of the burning object lay a deep ravine. After a time I came to a house, against the door of which a man was leaning. "What is all that burning stuff above, my friend?"

"Dross from the iron forges, sir!"

I now perceived a valley below me full of lights, and descending reached houses and a tramway. I had blazes now all around me. I went through a filthy slough, over a bridge, and up a street, from which dirty lanes branched off on either side, passed throngs of savage-looking people talking clamorously, shrank from addressing any of them, and finally undirected found myself before the Castle Inn at Merthyr Tydvil.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

IRON AND COAL—THE MARTYRED PRINCESS—CYFARTHA FAWR—DIABOLICAL STRUCTURE.

MERTHYR TYDVIL is situated in a broad valley through which roll the waters of the Taf. It was till late an inconsiderable village, but is at present the greatest mining place in Britain, and may be called with much propriety the capital of the iron and coal.

It bears the name of Merthyr Tydvil, which signifies the Martyr Tydvil, because in the old time a Christian British princess was slain in the locality which it occupies. Tydvil was the daughter of Brychan Prince of Brecon, surnamed Brycheiniawg, or the Breconian, who flourished in the fifth century and was a contemporary of Hengist. He was a man full of Christian zeal and a great preacher of the

Gospel, and gave his children, of which he had many both male and female by various wives, an education which he hoped would not only make them Christians, but enable them to preach the Gospel to their countrymen. They proved themselves worthy of his care, all of them without one exception becoming exemplary Christians, and useful preachers. In his latter days he retired to a hermitage in Glamorganshire near the Taf and passed his time in devotion, receiving occasionally visits from his children. Once, when he and several of them, amongst whom was Tydvil, were engaged in prayer a band of heathen Saxons rushed in upon them and slew Tydvil with three of her brothers. Ever since that time the place has borne the name of Martyr Tydvil.*

The Taf, which runs to the south of Merthyr, comes down from Breconshire, and enters the Bristol Channel at Cardiff, a place the name of which in English is the city on the Taf. It is one of the most beautiful of rivers, but is not navigable on account of its numerous shallows.

* Hanes Crefydd Yn NGhymru.

The only service which it renders to commerce is feeding a canal which extends from Merthyr to Cardiff. It is surprising how similar many of the Welsh rivers are in name: Taf, Tawey, Towey, Teivi, and Duffy differ but very little in sound. Taf and Teivi have both the same meaning, namely a tendency to spread out. The other names, though probably expressive of the properties or peculiarities of the streams to which they respectively belong, I know not how to translate.

The morning of the fourteenth was very fine. After breakfast I went to see the Cyfartha Fawr iron works, generally considered to be the great wonder of the place. After some slight demur I obtained permission from the superintendent to inspect them. I was attended by an intelligent mechanic. What shall I say about the Cyfartha Fawr? I had best say but very little. I saw enormous furnaces. I saw streams of molten metal. I saw a long ductile piece of red hot iron being operated upon. I saw millions of sparks flying about. I saw an immense wheel impelled round with frightful

velocity by a steam engine of two hundred and forty horse power. I heard all kinds of dreadful sounds. The general effect was stunning. These works belong to the Crawshays, a family distinguished by a strange kind of eccentricity, but also by genius and enterprising spirit, and by such a strict feeling of honour that it is a common saying that the word of any one of them is as good as the bond of other people.

After seeing the Cyfartha I roamed about making general observations. The mountain of dross which had startled me on the preceding night with its terrific glare, and which stands to the north-west of the town, looked now nothing more than an immense dark heap of cinders. It is only when the shades of night have settled down that the fire within manifests itself, making the hill appear an immense glowing mass. All the hills around the town, some of which are very high, have a scorched and blackened look. An old Anglesea bard, rather given to bombast, wishing to extol the abundant cheer of his native isle said: "The hills of Ireland are blackened by the smoke from the kitchens of Mona." With

much more propriety might a bard of the banks of the Taf, who should wish to apologize for the rather smutty appearance of his native vale, exclaim: "The hills around the Taf once so green are blackened by the smoke from the chimneys of Merthyr." The town is large and populous. The inhabitants for the most part are Welsh, and Welsh is the language generally spoken, though all have some knowledge of English. The houses are in general low and mean, and built of rough grey stone. Merthyr, however, can show several remarkable edifices though of a gloomy horrid Satanic character. There is the hall of the Iron, with its arches, from whence proceeds incessantly a thundering noise of hammers. Then there is an edifice at the foot of a mountain, half way up the side of which is a blasted forest and on the top an enormous crag. A truly wonderful edifice it is, such as Bos would have imagined had he wanted to paint the palace of Satan. There it stands: a house of reddish brick with a slate roof —four horrid black towers behind, two of them belching forth smoke and flame from their tops

—holes like pigeon holes here and there—two immense white chimneys standing by themselves. What edifice can that be of such strange mad details? I ought to have put that question to some one in Tydvil, but did not, though I stood staring at the diabolical structure with my mouth open. It is of no use putting the question to myself here.

After strolling about for some two hours with my hands in my pockets, I returned to my inn, called for a glass of ale, paid my reckoning, flung my satchel over my shoulder, and departed.

CHAPTER XXXVII.

START FOR CAERFILI.—JOHANNA COLGAN.—ALMS-GIVING.—THE MONSTROUS FEMALE.—THE EVIL PRAYER.—THE NEXT DAY.—THE AIFRIONN.—UNCLEAN SPIRITS.—EXPECTATION.—WREAKING VENGEANCE.—A DECENT ALMS.

I LEFT Merthyr about twelve o'clock for Caerfili. My course lay along the valley to the south-east. I passed a large village called Troed y Rhiw, or the foot of the slope, from its being at the foot of a lofty elevation, which stands on the left-hand side of the road, and was speeding onward fast, with the Taf at some distance on my right, when I saw a strange-looking woman advancing towards me. She seemed between forty and fifty, was bare-footed and bare-headed, with grizzled hair hanging in elf locks, and was dressed in rags and tatters. When about ten yards from me, she pitched forward, gave three or four grotesque tumbles, heels over head, then

standing bolt upright, about a yard before me, she raised her right arm, and shouted in a most discordant voice—"Give me an alms, for the glory of God!"

I stood still, quite confounded. Presently, however, recovering myself, I said:—"Really, I don't think it would be for the glory of God to give you alms."

"Ye don't! Then, Biadh an taifrionn—— however, I 'll give ye a chance yet. Am I to get my alms or not?"

"Before I give you alms I must know something about you. Who are you?"

"Who am I? Who should I be but Johanna Colgan, a bedivilled woman from the county of Limerick?"

"And how did you become bedevilled?"

"Because a woman something like myself said an evil prayer over me for not giving her an alms, which prayer I have at my tongue's end, and unless I get my alms will say over you. So for your own sake, honey, give me my alms, and let me go on my way."

"O, I am not to be frightened by evil

prayers! I shall give you nothing till I hear all about you."

"If I tell ye all about me will ye give me an alms?"

"Well, I have no objection to give you something if you tell me your story."

"Will ye give me a dacent alms?"

"O, you must leave the amount to my free will and pleasure. I shall give you what I think fit."

"Well, so ye shall, honey; and I make no doubt ye will give me a dacent alms, for I like the look of ye, and knew ye to be an Irishman half a mile off. Only four years ago, instead of being a bedivilled woman, tumbling about the world, I was as quiet and respectable a widow as could be found in the county of Limerick. I had a nice little farm at an aisy rint, horses, cows, pigs, and servants, and, what was better than all, a couple of fine sons, who were a help and comfort to me. But my black day was not far off. I was a mighty charitable woman, and always willing to give to the bacahs and other beggars that came about. Every morning,

before I opened my door, I got ready the alms which I intended to give away in the course of the day to those that should ask for them, and I made so good a preparation that, though plenty of cripples and other unfortunates wandering through the world came to me every day, part of the alms was sure to remain upon my hands every night when I closed my door. The alms which I gave away consisted of meal; and I had always a number of small measures of male standing ready on a board, one of which I used to empty into the poke of every bacah or other unfortunate who used to place himself at the side of my door and cry out 'Ave Maria!' or 'In the name of God!' Well, one morning I sat within my door spinning, with a little bit of a colleen beside me who waited upon me as servant. My measures of meal were all ready for the unfortunates who should come, filled with all the meal in the house; for there was no meal in the house save what was in those measures—divil a particle, the whole stock being exhausted; though by evening I expected plenty more, my two sons being gone to the ballybetagh, which

was seven miles distant, for a fresh supply, and for other things. Well, I sat within my door, spinning, with my servant by my side to wait upon me, and my measures of male ready for the unfortunates who might come to ask for alms. There I sat, quite proud, and more happy than I had ever felt in my life before; and the unfortunates began to make their appearance. First came a bacah on crutches; then came a woman with a white swelling; then came an individual who had nothing at all the matter with him, and was only a poor unfortunate, wandering about the world; then came a far cake,* a dark man, who was led about by a gossoon; after him a simpley, and after the simpleton somebody else as much or more unfortunate. And as the afflicted people arrived and placed themselves by the side of the door and said 'Ave Mary,' or 'In the name of God,' or crossed their arms, or looked down upon the ground, each according to his practice, I got up and emptied my measure of male into his poke, or whatever he carried about with him for receiving the alms which

* Fear caoch : vir cæcus.

might be given to him; and my measures of male began to be emptied fast, for it seemed that upon that day, when I happened to be particularly short of meal, all the unfortunates in the county of Limrick had conspired together to come to ask me for alms. At last every measure of meal was emptied, and there I sat in my house with nothing to give away provided an unfortunate should come. Says I to the colleen: 'What shall I do provided any more come, for all the meal is gone and there will be no more before the boys come home at night from the ballybetagh.' Says the colleen: 'If any more come, can't ye give them something else?' Says I: 'It has always been my practice to give in meal, and loth should I be to alter it; for if once I begin to give away other things, I may give away all I have.' Says the colleen: 'Let's hope no one else will come: there have been thirteen of them already.' Scarcely had she said these words, when a monstrous woman, half-naked, and with a long staff in her hand, on the top of which was a cross, made her appearance; and placing herself right before the

door, cried out so that you might have heard her for a mile, 'Give me an alms for the glory of God!' 'Good woman,' says I to her, 'you will be kind enough to excuse me: all the preparation I had made for alms has been given away, for I have relieved thirteen unfortunates this blessed morning—so may the Virgin help ye, good woman!' 'Give me an alms,' said the Beanvore, with a louder voice than before, 'or it will be worse for you.' 'You must excuse me, good mistress,' says I, 'but I have no more meal in the house. Those thirteen measures which you see there empty were full this morning, for what was in them I have given away to unfortunates. So the Virgin and Child help you.' 'Do you choose to give me an alms?' she shrieked, so that you might have heard her to Londonderry. 'If ye have no male give me something else.' 'You must excuse me, good lady,' says I: 'it is my custom to give alms in meal, and in nothing else. I have none in the house now; but if ye come on the morrow ye shall have a triple measure. In the meanwhile may the Virgin, Child, and the

Holy Trinity assist ye!' Thereupon she looked at me fixedly for a moment, and then said, not in a loud voice, but in a low, half-whispered way, which was ten times more deadly:—

"'Biaidh an taifrionn gan sholas duit a bhean shalach!'

Then turning from the door she went away with long strides. Now, honey, can ye tell me the meaning of those words?"

"They mean," said I, "unless I am much mistaken: 'May the Mass never comfort ye, you dirty quean!'"

"Ochone! that's the maning of them, sure enough. They are cramped words, but I guessed that was the meaning, or something of the kind. Well, after hearing the evil prayer, I sat for a minute or two quite stunned; at length recovering myself a bit I said to the colleen: 'Get up, and run after the woman and tell her to come back and cross the prayer.' I meant by crossing that she should call it back or do something that would take the venom out of it. Well, the colleen was rather loth to go, for she was a bit scared herself, but on my

beseeching her, she got up and ran after the woman, and being rather swift of foot, at last, though with much difficulty, overtook her, and begged her to come back and cross the prayer, but the divil of a woman would do no such thing, and when the colleen persisted she told her that if she didn't go back, she would say an evil prayer over her too. So the colleen left her, and came back crying and frighted. All the rest of the day I remained sitting on the stool speechless, thinking of the prayer which the woman had said, and wishing I had given her everything I had in the world, rather than she should have said it. At night came home the boys, and found their mother sitting on the stool, like one stupified. 'What's the matter with you, mother?' they said. 'Get up and help us to unpack. We have brought home plenty of things on the car, and amongst others a whole boll of meal.' 'You might as well have left it behind you,' said I; 'this morning a single measure of male would have been to me of all the assistance in the world, but I quistion now if I shall ever want meal again.'

They asked me what had happened to me, and after some time I told them how a monstrous woman had been to me, and had said an evil prayer over me, because having no meal in the house I had not given her an alms. 'Come, mother,' said they, 'get up and help us to unload! never mind the prayer of the monstrous woman—it is all nonsense.' Well, I got up and helped them to unload, and cooked them a bit and sat down with them, and tried to be merry, but felt that I was no longer the woman that I was. The next day I didn't seem to care what became of me, or how matters went on, and though there was now plenty of meal in the house, not a measure did I fill with it to give away in the shape of alms; and when the bacahs, and the liprous women, and the dark men, and the other unfortunates placed themselves at the side of the door, and gave me to understand that they wanted alms, each in his or her particular manner, divil an alms did I give them, but let them stand and took no heed of them, so that at last they took themselves off grumbling and cursing. And little did I care

for their grumblings and cursings. Two days before I wouldn't have had an unfortunate grumble at me, or curse me, for all the riches below the sun; but now their grumblings and curses didn't give me the slightest unasiness, for I had had an evil prayer spoken against me in the Shanna Gailey by the monstrous woman, and I knew that I was blighted in this world and the next. In a little time I ceased to pay any heed to the farming business, or to the affairs of the house, so that my sons had no comfort in their home. And I took to drink and induced my eldest son to take to drink too —my youngest son, however, did not take to drink, but conducted himself well, and toiled and laboured like a horse, and often begged me and his brother to consider what we were about, and not to go on in a way which would bring us all to ruin, but I paid no regard to what he said, and his brother followed my example, so that at last seeing things were getting worse every day, and that we should soon be turned out of house and home, for no rint was paid, every penny that could be got being consumed

in waste, he bade us farewell and went and listed for a sodger. But if matters were bad enough before he went away, they became much worse after; for now when the unfortunates came to the door for alms, instead of letting them stand in pace till they were tired, and took themselves off, I would mock them and point at them, and twit them with their sores and other misfortunes, and not unfrequently I would fling scalding water over them, which would send them howling and honing away, till at last there was not an unfortunate but feared to come within a mile of my door. Moreover I began to misconduct myself at chapel, more especially at the Aifrionn or Mass, for no sooner was the bell rung, and the holy corpus raised, than I would shout and hoorah, and go tumbling and toppling along the floor before the holy body, as I just now tumbled along the road before you, so that the people were scandalized, and would take me by the shoulders and turn me out of doors, and began to talk of ducking me in the bog. The priest of the parish, however, took my part, saying that I ought not

to be persecuted, for that I was not accountable for what I did, being a possessed person, and under the influence of divils. 'These, however,' said he, 'I'll soon cast out from her, and then the woman will be a holy cratur, much better than she ever was before.' A very learned man was Father Hogan, especially in casting out divils, and a portly good-looking man too, only he had a large rubicon nose, which people said he got by making over free with the cratur in sacret. I had often looked at the nose, when the divil was upon me, and felt an inclination to seize hold of it, jist to see how it felt. Well, he had me to his house several times, and there he put holy cloths upon me, and tied holy images to me, and read to me out of holy books, and sprinkled holy water over me, and put questions to me, and at last was so plased with the answers I gave him, that he prached a sermon about me in the chapel, in which he said that he had cast six of my divils out of me, and should cast out the seventh, which was the last, by the next Sabbath, and then should present me to the folks

in the chapel as pure a vessel as the blessed Mary herself—and that I was destined to accomplish great things, and to be a mighty instrument in the hands of the Holy Church, for that he intended to write a book about me describing the miracle he had performed in casting the seven divils out of me, which he should get printed at the printing-press of the blessed Columba, and should send me through all Ireland to sell the copies, the profits of which would go towards the support of the holy society for casting out unclane spirits, to which he himself belonged. Well, the people showed that they were plased by a loud shout, and went away longing for the next Sunday when I was to be presented to them without a divil in me. Five times the next week did I go to the priest's house, to be read to, and be sprinkled, and have cloths put upon me, in order that the work of casting out the last divil, which it seems was stronger than all the rest, might be made smooth and aisy, and on the Saturday I came to have the last divil cast out, and found his riverince in full canonicals, seated in his aisy chair.

'Daughter,' said he when he saw me, 'the work is nearly over. Now kneel down before me, and I will make the sign of the cross over your forehead, and then you will feel the last and strongest of the divils, which have so long possessed ye, go out of ye through your eyes, as I expect you will say to the people assembled in the chapel to-morrow.' So I put myself on my knees before his reverence, who after muttering something to himself, either in Latin or Shanna Gailey—I believe it was Latin, said 'Look me in the face, daughter!' Well I looked his reverence in the face, and there I saw his nose looking so large red and inviting that I could not resist the temptation, and before his reverence could make the sign of the cross, which doubtless would have driven the divil out of me, I made a spring at it, and seizing hold of it with fore-finger and thumb, pulled hard at it. Hot and inctious did it feel. O, the yell that his reverence gave! However, I did not let go my hold, but kept pulling at the nose, till at last to avoid the torment his reverence came tumbling down upon me, causing me by his weight to fall

back upon the floor. At the yell which he gave, and at the noise of the fall, in came rushing his reverence's housekeeper and stable-boy, who seeing us down on the floor, his reverence upon me and my hand holding his reverence's nose, for I felt loth to let it go, they remained in astonishment and suspense. When his reverence, however, begged them, for the Virgin's sake, to separate him from the divil of a woman, they ran forward, and having with some difficulty freed his reverence's nose from my hand, they helped him up. The first thing that his reverence did, on being placed on his legs, was to make for a horsewhip, which stood in one corner of the room, but I guessing how he meant to use it, sprang up from the floor, and before he could make a cut at me, ran out of the room, and hasted home. The next day, when all the people for twenty miles round met in the chapel, in the expectation of seeing me presented to them a purified and holy female, and hearing from my mouth the account of the miracle which his reverence had performed, his reverence made his appearance in

the pulpit with a dale of gould bater's leaf on his nose, and from the pulpit he told the people how I had used him, showing them the gould bater's leaf on his feature, as testimony of the truth of his words, finishing by saying that if at first there were seven devils there were now seven time seven within me. Well, when the people heard the story, and saw his nose with the bater's leaf upon it, they at first began to laugh, but when he appealed to their consciences, and asked them if such was fitting tratement for a praist, they said it was not, and that if he would only but curse me, they would soon do him justice upon me. His reverence then cursed by book bell and candle, and the people, setting off from the chapel, came in a crowd to the house where I lived, to wrake vengeance upon me. Overtaking my son by the way, who was coming home in a state of intoxication, they bate him within an inch of his life, and left him senseless on the ground, and no doubt would have seryed me much worse, only seeing them coming, and guessing what they came about, though I was a bit intoxicated myself, I escaped

by the back of the house out into the bog, where I hid myself amidst a copse of hazels. The people coming to the house, and not finding me there, broke and destroyed every bit of furniture, and would have pulled the house down, or set fire to it, had not an individual among them cried out that doing so would be of no use for that the house did not belong to me, and that destroying it would merely be an injury to the next tenant. So the people, after breaking my furniture and ill-trating two or three dumb beasts, which happened not to have been made away with, went away, and in the dead of night I returned to the house, where I found my son, who had just crawled home covered with blood and bruises. We hadn't, however, a home long, for the agents of the landlord came to seize for rent, took all they could find, and turned us out upon the wide world. Myself and son wandered together for an hour or two, then, having a quarrel with each other, we parted, he going one way and I another. Some little time after I heard that he was transported. As for myself, I thought I might as well take a leaf out of the

woman's book, who had been the ruin of me. So I went about bidding people give me alms for the glory of God, and threatening those who gave me nothing that the mass should never comfort them. It's a dreadful curse that, honey; and I would advise people to avoid it even though they give away all they have. If you have no comfort in the mass, you will have comfort in nothing else. Look at me: I have no comfort in the mass, for as soon as the priest's bell rings, I shouts and hoorahs, and performs tumblings before the blessed corpus, getting myself kicked out of chapel, and as little comfort as I have in the mass have I in other things, which should be a comfort to me. I have two sons who ought to be the greatest comfort to me, but are they so? We'll see—one is transported, and of course is no comfort to me at all. The other is a sodger. Is he a comfort to me? not a bit. A month ago when I was travelling through the black north, tumbling and toppling about, and threatening people with my prayer, unless they gave me alms, a woman, who knew me, told me that he was

with his regiment at Cardiff, here in Wales, whereupon I determined to go and see him, and crossing the water got into England, from whence I walked to Cardiff asking alms of the English in the common English way, and of the Irish, and ye are the first Irish I have met, in the way in which I asked them of you. But when I got to Cardiff did I see my son? I did not, for the day before he had sailed with his regiment to a place ten thousand miles away, so I shall never see his face again nor derive comfort from him. Oh, if there's no comfort from the mass there's no comfort from anything else, and he who has the evil prayer in the Shanna Gailey breathed upon him, will have no comfort from the mass. Now, honey, ye have heard the story of Johanna Colgan the bedivilled woman. Give her now a dacent alms and let her go!"

"Would you consider sixpence a decent alms?"

"I would. If you give me sixpence, I will not say my prayer over ye."

"Would you give me a blessing?"

"I would not. A bedivilled woman has no blessing to give."

"Surely if you are able to ask people to give you alms for the glory of God, you are able to give a blessing."

"Bodderation! are ye going to give me sixpence?"

"No! here's a shilling for you! Take it and go in peace."

"There's no pace for me," said Johanna Colgan, taking the money. "What did the monstrous famale say to me? Biaidh an taifrionn gan sholas duit a bhean shalach.* This is my pace—hoorah! hoorah!" then giving two or three grotesque topples she hurried away in the direction of Merthyr Tydvil.

* Curses of this description, or evil prayers as they are called, are very common in the Irish language, and are frequently turned to terrible account by that most singular class or sect the Irish mendicants. Several cases have occurred corresponding in many respects with the one detailed above.

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

PEN Y GLAS.—SALT OF THE EARTH.—THE QUAKERS' YARD.—THE RHUGYLGROEN.

As I proceeded on my way the scenery to the south on the farther side of the river became surprisingly beautiful. On that side noble mountains met the view, green fields and majestic woods, the latter brown it is true, for their leaves were gone, but not the less majestic for being brown. Here and there were white farmhouses: one of them, which I was told was called Pen y Glas, was a truly lovely little place. It stood on the side of a green hill with a noble forest above it, and put me wonderfully in mind of the hunting lodge, which Ifor Hael allotted as a retreat to Ab Gwilym and Morfydd, when they fled to him from Cardigan

to avoid the rage of the Bow Bach, and whose charming appearance made him say to his love :—

> "More bliss for us our fate propounds
> On Taf's green banks than Teivy's bounds."

On I wandered. After some time the valley assumed the form of an immense basin, enormous mountains composed its sides. In the middle rose hills of some altitude, but completely overcrowned by the mountains around. These hills exhibited pleasant inclosures, and were beautifully dotted with white farmhouses. Down below meandered the Taf, its reaches shining with a silver-like splendour. The whole together formed an exquisite picture, in which there was much sublimity, much still quiet life, and not a little of fantastic fairy loveliness.

The sun was hastening towards the west as I passed a little cascade on the left, the waters of which, after running under the road, tumbled down a gulley into the river. Shortly afterwards meeting a man I asked him how far it was to Caerfili.

"When you come to the Quakers' Yard,

which is a little way further on, you will be seven miles from Caerfili."

"What is the Quakers' Yard?"

"A place where the people called Quakers bury their dead."

"Is there a village near it?"

"There is, and the village is called by the same name."

"Are there any Quakers in it?"

"Not one, nor in the neighbourhood, but there are some, I believe, in Cardiff."

"Why do they bury their dead there?"

"You should ask them, not me. I know nothing about them, and don't want; they are a bad set of people."

"Did they ever do you any harm?"

"Can't say they did. Indeed I never saw one in the whole of my life."

"Then why do you call them bad?"

"Because everybody says they are."

"Not everybody. I don't; I have always found them the salt of the earth."

"Then it is salt that has lost its savour. But perhaps you are one of them?"

"No, I belong to the Church of England."

"O you do. Then good night to you. I am a Methodist. I thought at first that you were one of our ministers, and had hoped to hear from you something profitable and conducive to salvation, but——"

"Well, so you shall. Never speak ill of people of whom you know nothing. If that isn't a saying conducive to salvation I know not what is. Good evening to you."

I soon reached the village. Singular enough, the people of the very first house, at which I inquired about the Quakers' Yard, were entrusted with the care of it. On my expressing a wish to see it a young woman took down a key, and said that if I would follow her she would show it me. The Quakers' burying-place is situated on a little peninsula or tongue of land, having a brook on its eastern and northern sides, and on its western the Taf. It is a little oblong yard, with low walls, partly overhung with ivy. The entrance is a porch to the south. The Quakers are no friends to tombstones, and the only visible evidence that this was a place of burial was a

single flag-stone, with a half-obliterated inscription, which with some difficulty I deciphered, and was as follows :—

To the Memory of Thomas Edmunds
Who died April the ninth 1802 aged 60 years,
And of Mary Edmunds
Who died January the fourth 1810 aged 70.

The beams of the descending sun gilded the Quakers' burial-ground as I trod its precincts. A lovely resting-place looked that little oblong yard on the peninsula, by the confluence of the waters, and quite in keeping with the character of the quiet Christian people who sleep within it. The Quakers have for some time past been a decaying sect, but they have done good work in their day, and when they are extinct they are not destined to be soon forgotten. Soon forgotten! How should a sect ever be forgotten, to which have belonged three such men as George Fox, William Penn and Joseph Gurney?

Shortly after I left the Quakers' Yard the sun went down and twilight settled upon the earth. Pursuing my course I reached some woodlands, and on inquiring of a man, whom I saw stand-

ing at the door of a cottage, the name of the district, was told that it was called Ystrad Manach—the Monks' Strath or valley. This name it probably acquired from having belonged in times of old to some monkish establishment. The moon now arose and the night was delightful. As I was wandering along I heard again the same wild noise which I had heard the night before, on the other side of Merthyr Tydvil. The cry of the owl afar off in the woodlands. O that strange bird! O that strange cry! The Welsh as I have said on a former occasion call the owl Dylluan. Amongst the cowydds of Ab Gwilym there is one to the dylluan. It is full of abuse against the bird, with whom the poet is very angry for having with its cry frightened Morfydd back, who was coming to the wood to keep an assignation with him, but not a little of this abuse is wonderfully expressive and truthful. He calls the owl a grey thief—the haunter of the ivy bush—the chick of the oak, a blinking eyed witch, greedy of mice, with a visage like the bald forehead of a big ram, or the dirty face of an old abbess, which bears no little resem-

blance to the chine of an ape. Of its cry he says that it is as great a torment as an agonizing recollection, a cold shrill laugh from the midst of a kettle of ice; the rattling of sea-pebbles in an old sheep-skin, on which account many call the owl the hag of the Rhugylgroen. The Rhugylgroen, it will be as well to observe, is a dry sheepskin containing a number of pebbles, and is used as a rattle for frightening crows. The likening the visage of the owl to the dirty face of an old abbess is capital, and the likening the cry to the noise of the rhugylgroen is anything but unfortunate. For after all what does the voice of the owl so much resemble as a diabolical rattle! I'm sure I don't know. Reader do you?

I reached Caerfili at about seven o'clock, and went to the "Boar's Head," near the ruins of a stupendous castle, on which the beams of the moon were falling.

CHAPTER XXXIX.

CAERFILI CASTLE.—SIR CHARLES.—THE WAITER.—INKERMAN.

I SLEPT well during the night. In the morning after breakfast I went to see the castle, over which I was conducted by a woman who was intrusted with its care. It stands on the eastern side of the little town, and is a truly enormous structure, which brought to my recollection a saying of our great Johnson to be found in the account of his journey to the Western Islands, namely "that for all the castles which he had seen beyond the Tweed the ruins yet remaining of some one of those which the English built in Wales would find materials." The original founder was one John De Bryse, a powerful Norman, who married the daughter of Llewellyn Ap Jorwerth, the son-in-law of King John, and the most warlike of all the Welsh princes, whose exploits, and

particularly a victory which he obtained over his father-in-law, with whom he was always at war, have been immortalized by the great war-bard Dafydd Benfras. It was one of the strongholds which belonged to the Spencers, and served for a short time as a retreat to the unfortunate Edward the Second. It was ruined by Cromwell, the grand foe of the baronial castles of Britain, but not in so thorough and sweeping a manner as to leave it a mere heap of stones. There is a noble entrance porch, fronting the west—a spacious courtyard, a grand banqueting room, a corridor of vast length, several lofty towers, a chapel, a sally-port, a guard-room and a strange underground vaulted place called the mint, in which Caerfili's barons once coined money, and in which the furnaces still exist which were used for melting metal. The name Caerfili is said to signify the Castle of Haste, and to have been bestowed on the pile because it was built in a hurry. Caerfili, however, was never built in a hurry, as the remains show. Moreover the Welsh word for haste is not fil but ffrwst. Fil means a scudding or darting through

the air, which can have nothing to do with the building of a castle. Caerfili signifies Philip's City, and was called so after one Philip a saint. It no more means the castle of haste than Tintagel in Cornwall signifies the castle of guile, as the learned have said it does, for Tintagel simply means the house in the gill of the hill, a term admirably descriptive of the situation of the building.

I started from Caerfili at eleven for Newport, distant about seventeen miles. Passing through a toll-gate I ascended an acclivity, from the top of which I obtained a full view of the castle, looking stern, dark and majestic. Descending the hill I came to a bridge over a river called the Rhymni or Rumney, much celebrated in Welsh and English song—thence to Pentref Bettws, or the village of the bead-house, doubtless so-called from its having contained in old times a house in which pilgrims might tell their beads.

The scenery soon became very beautiful—its beauty, however, was to a certain extent marred by a horrid black object, a huge coal work, the

chimneys of which were belching forth smoke of the densest description. "Whom does that work belong to?" said I to a man nearly as black as a chimney sweep.

"Who does it belong to? Why, to Sir Charles."

"Do you mean Sir Charles Morgan?"

"I don't know. I only know that it belongs to Sir Charles, the kindest heart and richest man in Wales and in England too."

Passing some cottages I heard a group of children speaking English. Asked an intelligent-looking girl if she could speak Welsh.

"Yes," said she, "I can speak it, but not very well." There is not much Welsh spoken by the children hereabout. The old folks hold more to it.

I saw again the Rhymni river, and crossed it by a bridge; the river here was filthy and turbid owing of course to its having received the foul drainings of the neighbouring coal works—shortly afterwards I emerged from the coom or valley of the Rhymni and entered upon a fertile and tolerably level district. Passed by

Llanawst and Machen. The day which had been very fine now became dark and gloomy. Suddenly, as I was descending a slope, a brilliant party consisting of four young ladies in riding habits, a youthful cavalier and a servant in splendid livery—all on noble horses, swept past me at full gallop down the hill. Almost immediately afterwards seeing a road mender who was standing holding his cap in his hand—which he had no doubt just reverentially doffed—I said in Welsh: "Who are those ladies?"

"Merched Sir Charles—the daughters of Sir Charles," he replied.

"And is the gentleman their brother?"

"No! the brother is in the Crim—fighting with the Roosiaid. I don't know who yon gentleman be."

"Where does Sir Charles live?"

"Down in the Dyfryn, not far from Basallaig."

"If I were to go and see him," I said, "do you think he would give me a cup of ale?"

"I daresay he would; he has given me one many a time."

I soon reached Basallaig, a pleasant village standing in a valley and nearly surrounded by the groves of Sir Charles Morgan. Seeing a decent public-house I said to myself, "I think I shall step in and have my ale here, and not go running after Sir Charles whom perhaps after all I shouldn't find at home." So I went in and called for a pint of ale. Over my ale I trifled for about half-an-hour, then paying my groat I got up and set off for Newport in the midst of a thick mist which had suddenly come on and which speedily wetted me nearly to the skin.

I reached Newport at about half-past four and put up at a large and handsome inn called the King's Head. During dinner the waiter unasked related to me his history. He was a short thick fellow of about forty, with a very disturbed and frightened expression of countenance. He said that he was a native of Brummagem, and had lived very happily at an inn there as waiter, but at length had allowed himself to be spirited away to an establishment high up in Wales amidst the scenery. That very few

visitors came to the establishment, which was in a place so awfully lonesome that he soon became hipped and was more than once half in a mind to fling himself into a river which ran before the door and moaned dismally. That at last he thought his best plan would be to decamp, and accordingly took French leave early one morning. That after many frights and much fatigue he had found himself at Newport and taken service at the King's Head, but did not feel comfortable and was frequently visited at night by dreadful dreams. That he should take the first opportunity of getting to Brummagem, though he was afraid that he should not be able to get into his former place owing to his ungrateful behaviour. He then uttered a rather eloquent eulogium on the beauties of the black capital, and wound up all by saying that he would rather be a brazier's dog at Brummagem than head waiter at the best establishment in Wales.

After dinner I took up a newspaper and found in it an account of the battle of Inkerman, which appeared to have been fought on the fifth of November, the very day on which I had as-

cended Plinlymmon. I was sorry to find that my countrymen had suffered dreadfully, and would have been utterly destroyed but for the opportune arrival of the French. "In my childhood," said I, "the Russians used to help us against the French; now the French help us against the Russians. Who knows but before I die I may see the Russians helping the French against us?"

CHAPTER XL.

TOWN OF NEWPORT.—THE USK.—NOTE OF RECOGNITION.—AN OLD ACQUAINTANCE.—CONNAMARA QUEAN.—THE WAKE.—THE WILD IRISH.—THE TRAMPING LIFE.—BUSINESS AND PRAYER.—METHODISTS.—GOOD COUNSEL.

NEWPORT is a large town in Monmouthshire and had once walls and a castle. It is called in Welsh Cas Newydd ar Wysg, or the New Castle upon the Usk. It stands some miles below Caerlleon ar Wysg, and was probably built when that place, at one time one of the most considerable towns in Britain, began to fall into decay. The Wysg or Usk has its source among some wild hills in the south-west of Breconshire, and, after absorbing several smaller streams, amongst which is the Hondu, at the mouth of which Brecon stands, which on that account is called in Welsh Aber Hondu, and traversing the whole of Monmouthshire, enters the Bristol

Channel near Newport, to which place vessels of considerable burden can ascend. Wysg or Usk is an ancient British word, signifying water, and is the same as the Irish word uisge or whiskey, for whiskey, though generally serving to denote a spirituous liquor, in great vogue amongst the Irish, means simply water. The proper term for the spirit is uisquebaugh, literally acqua vitæ, but the compound being abbreviated by the English, who have always been notorious for their habit of clipping words, one of the strongest of spirits is now generally denominated by a word which is properly expressive of the simple element water.

Monmouthshire is at present considered an English county though certainly with little reason, for it not only stands on the western side of the Wye, but the names of almost all its parishes are Welsh, and many thousands of its population still speak the Welsh language. It is called in Welsh Sir, or Shire, Fynwy, and takes its name from the town Mynwy or Monmouth, which receives its own appellation from the river Mynwy or Minno on which it stands. There is a

river of much the same name, not in Macedon but in the Peninsula, namely the Minho, which probably got its denomination from that race cognate to the Cumry, the Gael, who were the first colonizers of the Peninsula, and whose generic name yet stares us in the face and salutes our ears in the words Galicia and Portugal.

I left Newport at about ten o'clock on the 16th, the roads were very wet, there having been a deluge of rain during the night. The morning was a regular November one, dull and gloomy. Desirous of knowing whereabouts in these parts the Welsh language ceased I interrogated several people whom I met. First spoke to Esther Williams. She told me she came from Pennow some miles farther on, that she could speak Welsh, and that indeed all the people could for at least eight miles to the east of Newport. This latter assertion of hers was, however, anything but corroborated by a young woman, with a pitcher on her head, whom I shortly afterwards met, for she informed me that she could speak no Welsh, and that for one

who could speak it, from where I was to the place where it ceased altogether, there were ten who could not. I believe the real fact is that about half the people for seven or eight miles to the east of Newport speak Welsh, more or less, as about half those whom I met and addressed in Welsh, answered me in that tongue.

Passed through Penow or Penhow, a small village. The scenery in the neighbourhood of this place is highly interesting. To the north-west at some distance is Mynydd Turvey, a sharp pointed blue mountain. To the south-east, on the right, much nearer, are two beautiful green hills, the lowest prettily wooded, and having on its top a fair white mansion called Penhow Castle, which belongs to a family of the name of Cave. Thence to Llanvaches, a pretty little village. When I was about the middle of this place I heard an odd sound something like a note of recognition, which attracted my attention to an object very near to me, from which it seemed to proceed, and which was coming from the direction in which I was going. It was the figure seemingly of a female, wrapped in a coarse blue

cloak, the feet bare and the legs bare also nearly up to the knee, both terribly splashed with the slush of the road. The head was surmounted by a kind of hood which just permitted me to see coarse red hair, a broad face, grey eyes, a snubbed nose, blubber lips and great white teeth—the eyes were staring intently at me. I stopped and stared too, and at last thought I recognized the features of the uncouth girl I had seen on the green near Chester with the Irish tinker Tourlough and his wife.

"Dear me!" said I, "did I not see you near Chester last summer?"

"To be sure ye did; and ye were going to pass me without a word of notice or kindness had I not given ye a bit of a hail."

"Well," said I, "I beg your pardon. How is it all wid ye?"

"Quite well. How is it wid yere hanner?"

"Tolerably. Where do you come from?"

"From Chepstow, yere hanner."

"And where are you going to?"

"To Newport, yere hanner."

"And I come from Newport, and am going

to Chepstow. Where's Tourlough and his wife?"

"At Cardiff, yere hanner; I shall join them again to-morrow."

"Have you been long away from them?"

"About a week, yere hanner."

"And what have you been doing?"

"Selling my needles, yere hanner."

"Oh! you sell needles. Well, I am glad to have met you. Let me see. There's a nice little inn on the right:—won't you come in and have some refreshment?"

"Thank yere hanner; I have no objection to take a glass wid an old friend."

"Well, then, come in; you must be tired, and I shall be glad to have some conversation with you."

We went into the inn—a little tidy place. On my calling, a respectable-looking old man made his appearance behind a bar. After serving my companion with a glass of peppermint, which she said she preferred to anything else, and me with a glass of ale, both of which I paid for, he retired, and we sat down on two

old chairs beneath a window in front of the bar.

"Well," said I, "I suppose you have Irish: "here 's slainte——"

"Slainte yuit a shaoi," said the girl, tasting her peppermint.

"Well: how do you like it?"

"It's very nice indeed."

"That's more than I can say of the ale, which, like all the ale in these parts, is bitter. Well, what part of Ireland do you come from?"

"From no part at all. I never was in Ireland in my life. I am from Scotland Road, Manchester."

"Why, I thought you were Irish!"

"And so I am; and all the more from being born where I was. There's not such a place for Irish in all the world as Scotland Road."

"Were your father and mother from Ireland?"

"My mother was from Ireland: my father was Irish of Scotland Road, where they met and married."

"And what did they do after they married?"

"Why, they worked hard, and did their best to get a livelihood for themselves and children, of which they had several besides myself, who was the eldest. My father was a bricklayer, and my mother sold apples and oranges and other fruits, according to the season, and also whiskey, which she made herself, as she well knew how; for my mother was not only a Connacht woman, but an out-and-out Connamara quean, and when only thirteen had wrought with the lads who used to make the raal cratur on the islands between Ochterard and Bally na hinch. As soon as I was able, I helped my mother in making and disposing of the whiskey and in selling the fruit. As for the other children, they all died when young, of favers, of which there is always plenty in Scotland Road. About four years ago—that is, when I was just fifteen—there was a great quarrel among the workmen about wages. Some wanted more than their masters were willing to give; others were willing to take what was offered them. Those who were dissatisfied were called bricks; those who were not

were called dungs. My father was a brick; and, being a good man with his fists, was looked upon as a very proper person to fight a principal man amongst the dungs. They fought in the fields near Salford for a pound a side. My father had it all his own way for the first three rounds, but in the fourth, receiving a blow under the ear from the dung, he dropped, and never got up again, dying suddenly. A grand wake my father had, for which my mother furnished usquebaugh galore; and comfortably and decently it passed over till about three o'clock in the morning, when, a dispute happening to arise—not on the matter of wages, for there was not a dung amongst the Irish of Scotland Road—but as to whether the O'Keefs or O'Kellys were kings of Ireland a thousand years ago, a general fight took place, which brought in the police, who, being soon dreadfully baten, as we all turned upon them, went and fetched the military, with whose help they took and locked up several of the party, amongst whom were my mother and myself, till the next morning, when we were taken before the magis-

trates, who, after a slight scolding, set us at liberty, one of them saying that such disturbances formed part of the Irish funeral service; whereupon we returned to the house, and the rest of the party joining us, we carried my father's body to the churchyard, where we buried it very decently, with many tears and groanings."

"And how did your mother and you get on after your father was buried?"

"As well as we could, yere hanner; we sold fruit and now and then a drop of whiskey which we made; but this state of things did not last long, for one day my mother seeing the dung who had killed my father she flung a large flint stone and knocked out his right eye, for doing which she was taken up and tried and sentenced to a year's imprisonment, chiefly it was thought because she had been heard to say that she would do the dung a mischief the first time she met him. She, however, did not suffer all her sentence, for before she had been in prison three months she caught a disorder which carried her off. I went on selling fruit by myself

whilst she was in trouble, and for some time after her death, but very lonely and melancholy. At last my uncle Tourlough, or as the English would call him, Charles, chancing to come to Scotland Road along with his family, I was glad to accept an invitation to join them which he gave me, and with them I have been ever since, travelling about England and Wales and Scotland, helping my aunt with the children and driving much the same trade which she has driven for twenty years past, which is not an unprofitable one."

"Would you have any objection to tell me all you do?"

"Why I sells needles, as I said before, and sometimes I buys things of servants, and sometimes I tells fortunes."

"Do you ever do anything in the way of striopachas?"

"O, no! I never do anything in that line; I would be burnt first. I wonder you should dream of such a thing."

"Why surely it is not worse than buying things of servants, who no doubt steal them from

their employers, or telling fortunes, which is dealing with the devil."

"Not worse? Yes a thousand times worse; there is nothing so very particular in doing them things, but striopachas—O dear!"

"It's a dreadful thing I admit, but the other things are quite as bad; you should do none of them."

"I'll take good care that I never do one, and that is striopachas; them other things I know are not quite right, and I hope soon to have done wid them; any day I can shake them off and look people in the face, but were I once to do striopachas I could never hold up my head."

"How comes it that you have such a horror of striopachas?"

"I got it from my mother and she got it from hers. All Irish women have a dread of striopachas. It's the only thing that frights them; I manes the wild Irish, for as for the quality women I have heard they are no bit better than the English. Come, yere hanner, let's talk of something else."

"You were saying now that you were think-

ing of leaving off fortune-telling and buying things of servants. Do you mean to depend upon your needles alone?"

"No; I am thinking of leaving off tramping altogether and going to the Tir na Siar."

"Isn't that America?"

"It is, yere hanner; the land of the west is America."

"A long way for a lone girl."

"I should not be alone, yere hanner; I should be wid my uncle Tourlough and his wife."

"Are they going to America?"

"They are, yere hanner; they intends leaving off business and going to America next spring."

"It will cost money."

"It will, yere hanner; but they have got money, and so have I."

"Is it because business is slack that you are thinking of going to America?"

"O no, yere hanner; we wish to go there in order to get rid of old ways and habits, amongst which are fortune-telling and buying things of sarvants, which yere hanner was jist now checking me wid."

"And can't you get rid of them here?"

"We cannot yere hanner. If we stay here we must go on tramping, and it is well known that doing them things is part of tramping."

"And what would you do in America?"

"O we could do plenty of things in America —most likely we should buy a piece of land and settle down."

"How came you to see the wickedness of the tramping life?"

"By hearing a great many sarmons and preachings, and having often had the Bible read to us by holy women who came to our tent."

"Of what religion do you call yourselves now?"

"I don't know, yere hanner; we are clane unsettled about religion. We were once Catholics and carried Saint Colman of Cloyne about wid us in a box; but after hearing a sermon at a church about images, we went home, took the saint out of his box and cast him into a river."

"O it will never do to belong to the Popish

religion, a religion which upholds idol-worship and persecutes the Bible—you should belong to the Church of England."

"Well, perhaps we should, yere hanner, if its ministers were not such proud violent men. O, you little know how they look down upon all poor people, especially on us tramps. Once my poor aunt, Tourlough's wife, who has always had stronger convictions than any of us, followed one of them home after he had been preaching, and begged him to give her God, and was told by him that she was a thief, and if she didn't take herself out of the house he would kick her out."

"Perhaps, after all," said I; "you had better join the Methodists—I should say that their ways would suit you better than those of any other denomination of Christians."

"Yere hanner knows nothing about them, otherwise ye wouldn't talk in that manner. Their ways would never do for people who want to have done with lying and staling, and have always kept themselves clane from striopachas. Their word is not worth a rotten

straw, yere hanner, and in every transaction which they have with people they try to cheat and overreach—ask my uncle Tourlough, who has had many dealings with them. But what is far worse, they do that which the wildest calleen t'other side of Ougteraarde would be burnt rather than do. Who can tell ye more on that point than I, yere hanner? I have been at their chapels at nights and have listened to their screaming prayers, and have seen what's been going on outside the chapels after their services, as they call them, were over—I never saw the like going on outside Father Toban's chapel, yere hanner! Yere hanner's hanner asked me if I ever did anything in the way of striopachas—now I tell ye that I was never asked to do anything in that line but by one of them folks—a great man amongst them he was, both in the way of business and prayer, for he was a commercial traveller during six days of the week and a preacher on the seventh—and such a preacher. Well, one Sunday night after he had preached a sermon an hour-and-a-half long, which had put half a dozen women into

what they call static fits, he overtook me in a dark street and wanted me to do striopachas with him — he didn't say striopachas, yer hanner, for he had no Irish—but he said something in English which was the same thing."

"And what did you do?"

"Why I asked him what he meant by making fun of a poor ugly girl—for no one knows better than myself, yere hanner, that I am very ugly—whereupon he told me that he was not making fun of me, for it had long been the chief wish of his heart to commit striopachas with a wild Irish Papist, and that he believed if he searched the world he should find none wilder than myself."

"And what did you reply?"

"Why I said to him, yere hanner, that I would tell the congregation, at which he laughed and said that he wished I would, for that the congregation would say they didn't believe me, though at heart they would, and would like him all the better for it."

"Well, and what did you say then?"

"Nothing at all, yere hanner; but I spat in

his face and went home and told my uncle Tourlough, who forthwith took out a knife and began to sharp it on a whetstone, and I make no doubt would have gone and stuck the fellow like a pig, had not my poor aunt begged him not on her knees. After that we had nothing more to do with the Methodists as far as religion went."

"Did this affair occur in England or Wales?"

"In the heart of England, yere hanner; we have never been to the Welsh chapels, for we know little of the language."

"Well, I am glad it didn't happen in Wales; I have rather a high opinion of the Welsh Methodists. The worthiest creature I ever knew was a Welsh Methodist. And now I must leave you and make the best of my way to Chepstow."

"Can't yere hanner give me God before ye go?"

"I can give you half-a-crown to help you on your way to America."

"I want no half-crowns, yere hanner; but if ye would give me God I'd bless ye."

"What do you mean by giving you God?"

"Putting Him in my heart by some good counsel which will guide me through life."

"The only good counsel I can give you is to keep the commandments; one of them it seems you have always kept. Follow the rest and you can't go very wrong."

"I wish I knew them better than I do, yere hanner."

"Can't you read?"

"O no, yere hanner, I can't read, neither can Tourlough nor his wife."

"Well, learn to read as soon as possible. When you have got to America and settled down you will have time enough to learn to read."

"Shall we be better, yere hanner, after we have learnt to read?"

"Let's hope you will."

"One of the things, yere hanner, that have made us stumble is that some of the holy women, who have come to our tent and read the Bible to us, have afterwards asked my aunt and me to tell them their fortunes."

"If they have the more shame for them, for they can have no excuse. Well, whether you learn to read or not still eschew striopachas, don't steal, don't deceive, and worship God in spirit, not in image. That's the best counsel I can give you."

"And very good counsel it is, yere hanner, and I will try to follow it, and now, yere hanner, let us go our two ways."

We placed our glasses upon the bar and went out. In the middle of the road we shook hands and parted, she going towards Newport and I towards Chepstow. After walking a few yards I turned round and looked after her. There she was in the damp lowering afternoon wending her way slowly through mud and puddle, her upper form huddled in the rough frieze mantle, and her coarse legs bare to the top of the calves. "Surely," said I to myself, "there never was an object less promising in appearance. Who would think that there could be all the good sense and proper feeling in that uncouth girl which there really is?"

CHAPTER XLI.

ARRIVAL AT CHEPSTOW.—STIRRING LYRIC.—CONCLUSION.

I PASSED through Caer Went, once an important Roman station, and for a long time after the departure of the Romans a celebrated British city, now a poor desolate place consisting of a few old-fashioned houses and a strange-looking dilapidated church. No Welsh is spoken at Caer Went, nor to the east of it, nor indeed for two or three miles before you reach it from the west.

The country between it and Chepstow, from which it is distant about four miles, is delightfully green, but somewhat tame.

Chepstow stands on the lower part of a hill, near to where the beautiful Wye joins the noble Severn. The British name of the place is Aber Wye or the disemboguement of the Wye. The Saxons gave it the name of Chepstow, which in

their language signifies a place where a market is held, because even in the time of the Britons it was the site of a great cheap or market. After the Norman Conquest it became the property of De Clare, one of William's followers, who built near it an enormous castle, which enjoyed considerable celebrity during several centuries from having been the birthplace of Strongbow, the conqueror of Ireland, but which is at present chiefly illustrious from the mention which is made of it in one of the most stirring lyrics of modern times, a piece by Walter Scott, called the "Norman Horseshoe," commemorative of an expedition made by a De Clare of Chepstow with the view of insulting with the print of his courser's shoe the green meads of Glamorgan, and which commences thus :—

"Red glows the forge"—

I went to the principal inn, where I engaged a private room and ordered the best dinner which the people could provide. Then leaving my satchel behind me I went to the castle, amongst the ruins of which I groped and wandered for nearly an hour, occasionally repeating

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verses of the Norman Horseshoe. I then went to the Wye and drank of the waters at its mouth, even as sometime before I had drunk of the waters at its source. Then returning to my inn I got my dinner, after which I called for a bottle of port, and placing my feet against the sides of the grate I passed my time drinking wine and singing Welsh songs till ten o'clock at night, when I paid my reckoning, amounting to something considerable. Then shouldering my satchel I proceeded to the railroad station, where I purchased a first-class ticket, and ensconcing myself in a comfortable carriage was soon on the way to London, where I arrived at about four o'clock in the morning, having had during the whole of my journey a most uproarious set of neighbours a few carriages behind me, namely some hundred and fifty of Napier's tars returning from their expedition to the Baltic.

THE END.

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